National Restaurant Association

Vol. 5 ☐ No. 7 ☐ August 1985

AR200-1A

NRA NEWS

Motorcoach tours/Restaurants
A Lucrative Partnership

NRA MEETINGS

Seminars

Basic Foodservice Courses

Basic Supervision in Foodservice
8/14 Jackson, MS

Dining Room Management
9/4 Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
9/16 Las Vegas, NV
9/24 Burlington, VT
10/8 Bloomington, MN
10/22 Madison, WI
11/4 St. Louis, MO

Kitchen Management
9/10 Charlotte, NC
9/12 Birmingham, AL
9/17 Toronto, Ontario, Canada
10/1 Wilmington, DE
10/22 Colorado Springs, CO
10/24 Eugene, OR

People-power and Profits
9/12 Tucson, AZ
10/10 Falmouth, MA

Tools for Training
8/13 Tulsa, OK
9/4 Minneapolis, MN
9/18 Columbia, SC
10/24 Kansas City, MO
11/7 Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Food Production Courses

Creative Buffets
9/9 Atlantic City, NJ
9/19 Newport, RI
10/10 Arlington, VA
10/17 Indianapolis, IN

The Pantry: Prep for Profit
9/11 Columbus, OH
9/25 Alexandria, VA

Perfecting Your Culinary Skills
9/10 Atlantic City, NJ
9/26 Austin, TX
10/22 Boise, ID
10/24 Spokane, WA
11/7 Omaha, NE

Simplified Baking Workshop
9/17 San Diego, CA
9/19 Sacramento, CA

Soups and Sauces
10/15 Baltimore, MD
10/16 Williamsburg, VA
10/28 Burlington, VT
10/29 Pittsburgh, PA

Foodservice Management Courses

Banquet Management
9/10 Atlantic City, NJ
9/16 Washington, DC
10/3 Chicago, IL

Computers in Foodservice: A Primer
9/23 Little Rock, AR
10/22 Oklahoma City, OK

Computers in Foodservice: Advanced Technology
9/10 Detroit, MI
10/23 Oklahoma City, OK

Employee Motivation
9/9 Owensboro, KY
9/11 Kansas City, MO
10/8 Salt Lake City, UT
10/27 Wichita, KS

Food Cost Management
9/9 Atlantic City, NJ
9/23 Denver, CO
9/30 Baltimore, MD
10/21 Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Menu Development
9/17 Atlanta, GA
9/25 Shreveport, LA
10/14 Louisville, KY
10/15 Nashville, TN

Off-Premise Catering
9/4–5 Seattle, WA
9/9–10 Newton, MA
10/22–23 Minneapolis, MN
10/28–29 San Diego, CA

Operational Analysis
9/18–19 Baltimore, MD
10/7–8 Detroit, MI
10/28–29 San Antonio, TX

Planning & Implementing Restaurant Marketing Strategy
9/9–10 Atlantic City, NJ
9/25–26 Milwaukee, WI
10/8–9 Westchester, NY

Real Estate & Restaurant Site Selection
9/16–17 Jacksonville, FL
10/2–3 Washington, DC
10/21–22 Boston, MA

Restaurant Design & Facilities Planning
10/30–31 Cincinnati, OH

National Conferences

National Conference on Marketing, Advertising and Promotions
8/25–28 Chicago, IL

Tenth Annual California Wine Workshop
9/20–25 Napa Valley, CA

National Conference on Catering
11/10–13 Las Vagas, NV

INFO '86: Independent Operators National Conference
2/16–19/86 Orlando, FL

National Conference on Computers
3/16–19/86 Washington, DC

For more information, contact: NRA Education Programs 800-424-5156 or 202-638-6100

Study Group Meetings

Foodservice Purchasing Managers
9/4–6 New Orleans, LA

MAECO
9/4–6 New Orleans, LA

Internal Audit
9/17–20 New Orleans, LA

Financial Officers
9/18–20 Boca Raton, FL

Tax Executives
9/18–20 Boca Raton, FL

Large Independent Operators
9/26–28 Washington, DC

Market Research
10/2–4 Chicago, IL

Management Information Systems (MIS)
10/13–16 Boston, MA

Quality Assurance
10/16–18 Chicago, IL

Marketing Executives
10/27–30 San Francisco, CA

Market Research
Fall, 1985

For more information on specific study groups, contact Philip Kralovec, 312-853-2525.

NRA NEWS
Vol. 5 No. 7 August 1985

Officers
Chairman of the Board and President
Ted Balestreri
Vice President
G. "Jim" Hasslocher
Treasurer
Michael Grisanti
Executive Vice President
William P. Fisher
Corporate Secretary
Ruth K. Tracy

Chairman
Communications Committee
Jim L. Peterson
Executive Committee
Victor Cassano
Steve Elmont
John R. Farquharson
Lee Hasenour
Florence Iaramillo
Erik Jensen
Harry Klingeman
Harry Knowles
Paul Lazar
Arthur McGreevy
Roger Marshall
Raymond Matson
John Rian
Robert Spencer
Ralph Wood
Robert Wood

Senior Director
Jeffrey R. Prince
Executive Editor
Steven J. Dahlloff
Editor
Sylvia Rivchun
Communications Specialists
Cecelia L. Niepold
Anne E. Papa
Government Relations Coordinator
Jay Morris
Foodservice Trends Coordinator
Sallie W. Adams
Staff Contributors
Susan Adelman
Toni C. Corcoran
Dorothy Dee
Kathy Grosss
Bette B. Hoyt
Cathy Kenney
Susan E. Mills
Robert A. Palmer
Michelle Rabayda
Claire Regan
Shannon Tuel
Editorial Typists
Valerie Pines
Riley Stern

Editorial offices and NRA headquarters
311 First Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 638-6100

Chicago offices
One Park Place, Suite 2000
Chicago, IL 60601
(312) 853-2525

NRA NEWS (ISSN 0465-7004) is published monthly, except combined June/July issue, by the National Restaurant Association, 311 First St., N.W., Washington, DC 20001. Membership dues include a one-year subscription to *NRA NEWS*. The non-member subscription fee is $125 per year. Second-class postage paid at Chicago, IL 60607 and additional mailing offices. Copyright © NRA 1985. Postmaster, send address change to *NRA NEWS*, 311 First St., N.W., Washington, DC 20001.

All rights reserved.
Reprint with permission only.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ted Balestreri
Co-Owner
The Sardine Factory, Inc.
Monterey, California

NRA holds Public Affairs Conference

Long before I became NRA President, I realized that lawmakers and regulators in Washington could make or break my business. They make the decisions that affect every aspect of our operations. But I also realized that we, in turn, can affect these decision makers if we only take the time to communicate our concerns.

Foodservice operators from all over the country will gather in Washington from September 30 through October 2 for NRA's first Washington Public Affairs Conference. They will hear leading commentators and politicians and be briefed on current legislative proposals that will affect their businesses. They will meet with their senators and representatives and explain their priorities and concerns.

As your President and a businessman concerned with the environment in which we operate, I urge you to attend this important event. Shortly, you will receive an announcement concerning the conference in the mail. Return the registration form immediately. Plan to be with us in Washington when we gather to do something about government interference in our businesses.

NRA fights tax caps and elimination of TJTC

One of the many issues to be discussed at the conference will be the administration's tax simplification proposal. NRA continues to oppose any limit on the business marketing meal and to encourage the continuation of the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit (TJTC). On a daily basis, NRA lobbyists have been visiting congressional offices and presenting your point of view on these issues. During the summer, meetings between restaurateurs and their senators and congressmen are being held in their home states. And during the next few weeks, NRA board members will be visiting major media markets to seek editorial support for our position.

We would all like to see our tax code reformed. There is, however, no reason to accept provisions in any tax simplification plan which single out our industry for undue economic burden.

NRA opposes labeling in restaurants

NRA also continues its opposition to petitions calling for labeling on packaged restaurant foods. A Nader splinter group called Center for Science in the Public Interest filed these petitions with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). NRA has filed comments with these agencies, explaining the total impracticality of labeling in foodservice outlets. The association has also been responding to the many media inquiries generated by the petitions.

New publication covers food additives

As in the case of sulfiting agents, NRA will fight any attempt to impose mandatory labeling requirements on any sector of the foodservice industry.

The labeling issue suggests that some of our customers as well as the media are concerned about the ingredients of restaurant foods. NRA has produced a new *Current Issues Report* entitled "A Restaurateur's Guide to Consumer Food Safety Concerns." This new publication will help you answer questions about substances commonly added to foods during processing. You will receive this new publication in the mail during this month.

Members register for seminars, conferences

As I travel around the country as your representative, I am always amazed at the number of foodservice operators who tell me they have attended and profited from NRA seminars and conferences. This year the association will offer 250 seminars in 47 different states and Canada. Some will teach basic skills; others will cover sophisticated techniques. Topics will range from kitchen management to perfecting your culinary skills to restaurant design and facilities planning.

You should also plan to attend one or more of the national conferences. You can still register for the Marketing, Advertising and Promotions Conference, August 25 through 28 in Chicago. If you are involved in catering or are contemplating adding this function, the National Conference on Catering, November 10 through 13, should be on your calendar. And every independent operator should plan to attend INFO '86—NRA's second annual conference for independent foodservice operators. The experts are gathering to share their insights into what will happen in our industry tomorrow. You should be there to join in the discussion.

During the last two months, 330 members joined NRA. I welcome you to the most prestigious foodservice trade association in the world. Your participation in NRA will make your business grow and make the association more effective in its endeavors on your behalf. We're glad to have you with us.

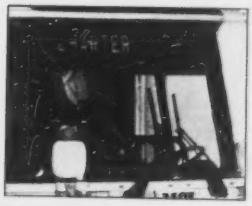
Sincerely,

Ted

Ted J. Balestreri
President & Chairman of the Board

CONTENTS

Cover Story



12 The motorcoach tours you see on America's highways and back roads are more than just a way to see the country. They mean business—big business—for towns from coast to coast. And restaurants get the lion's share of the touring dollar—about one-third. If you haven't yet considered the tour bus market as a way to expand your business, think again. As this month's cover story makes clear, all types of restaurants are discovering the possibilities of this untapped market.

Specials

Safety **17** Is your operation ready to safeguard your customers? Here are some pointers for a successful safety program.

20 How to ensure a hazard-free environment for your workers—from nonslip shoes to safety training.

Recipes **24** Recipes are part of an operation's total management matrix.

Family Business **28** How the family business woos the next generation.

Promotions **32** Promotions can take the slump out of slow periods.

Departments

Short Orders **6** October 16: World Food Day. NRA begins training program with District of Columbia government.

Washington Report **8** NRA to hold first public affairs conference. NRA supports immigration reform bill. NRA asks agencies to reject fast food labeling. Interview with Agriculture Secretary Block.

Board Room **11** NRA President Balestreri testifies before House Ways and Means Committee against capping the deductions for the business marketing meal.

Fisher's Law **35** Flying sometimes brings you down to earth.

Foodservice Trends **36** Consumers eat out more in 1985. Large restaurants account for a growing share of restaurant units and sales. *CREST* report.

How's Business? **45** This summer, business is not as strong as some operators hoped; others, however, are thriving.

Food for Thought **47** Jobs that change with the weather.

Photograph by Mark Borchelt on location at Mosby's Tavern, Middleburg, VA.
Bus courtesy of East Coast Parlor Car Tours

SHORT ORDERS

October 16: World Food Day

- *Every minute 20 children in the world die of hunger.*
- *In 1982, the world produced 34 million metric tons of food. If this food were distributed equally, it would be almost twice as much needed to feed every man, woman and child on earth.*

These are just two of the facts garnered and distributed by the New Jersey Restaurant Association (NJRA), working in cooperation with the World Food Day Committee. In addition to the questionnaire, NJRA decided to help its members publicize World Food Day— October 16, 1985— by providing free placemats to be used on the day.

"Every observance, small or large, makes an important contribution in heightening public awareness about the issue of hunger and that—for the first time in history—human beings possess the technology and resources to end hunger forever," says the National Committee for World Food Day.

World Food Day activities each year take many shapes. Different communities, different groups within those communities and different countries have their own priorities. But what all participants share is the common goal of hunger elimination and improving the lives of those most in need.

Do your part this year to end hunger on this planet. The national office of the committee can provide resources on food/hunger issues that can be used in your planning and programs. To obtain a copy of these materials, contact the National Committee for World Food Day, 1001 22nd St., N.W., Washington, DC 20437, (202) 653-2404.

Enrollment period for NRA catastrophe major medical plan

A special enrollment period is now in progress for NRA's $1,000,000 Catastrophe Major Medical Insurance Plan. During this time, enrollment is open to all NRA members and spouses regardless of age. Unmarried dependent children from birth to age 25 also qualify. Acceptance is guaranteed. Enrollment closes October 1, 1985.

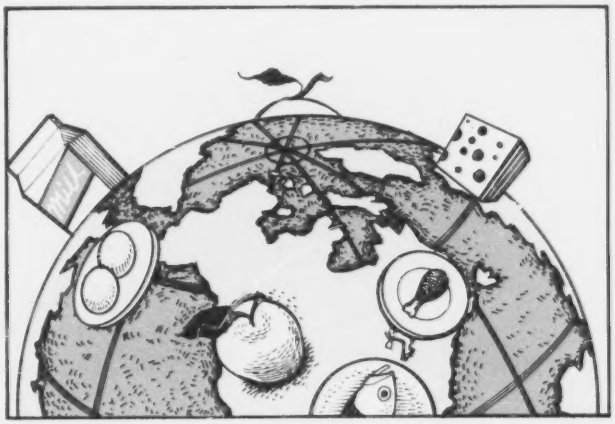
The catastrophe major medical insurance plan provides insurance protection designed to take over after basic health insurance benefits are exhausted. Skyrocketing hospital and nursing home costs, escalating doctors' fees, expensive medicines, specialized surgical procedures and new equipment can push expenses far over the limit that basic health insurance was designed to handle.

Since this plan is supplemental coverage for serious, long-term illnesses and accidents, it includes a $25,000 deductible. All eligible expenses for an illness or accident are applied toward the deductible in full whether paid out-of-pocket or by other insurance. A period of two years is given to reach the deductible amount.

Once the deductible has been reached, the catastrophe major medical plan pays 100 percent of all eligible hospital-medical-surgical-convalescent expenses up to $1,000,000 for up to 10 full years.

Should more than one insured family member be injured in the same accident or contract the same disease within 30 days, only one deductible will apply for those involved. Yet each insured person is eligible for full benefits. This is just one of the outstanding features of this low-cost plan.

All members have been mailed complete information on NRA's $1,000,000 Catastrophe Major Medical Insurance Plan. For additional information, contact NRA's insurance administrator Albert H. Wohlers & Co., NRA Group Insurance Plans, 1500 Higgins Rd., Park Ridge, IL 60068.



"Share our strength" to end world hunger

A Washington, DC-based organization called Share Our Strength (SOS) is asking restaurateurs throughout the country to pledge annual tax-deductible contributions of $500 or more to help famine victims in Ethiopia and other parts of the world. Contributions will be channelled directly through SOS to established organizations which provide hunger relief. In return, participating restaurants will receive a window sticker, designating them as SOS supporters. A public awareness program, featuring politicians, entertainers and sports figures, will promote SOS and participating restaurants.

Currently, 29 restaurants in 11 cities are participating in the program. For more information, contact: SOS, 401 C St., N.E., Washington, DC 20002, (202) 546-5161.

NRA begins training program with DC government

NRA has joined forces with representatives of the District of Columbia (DC) government and foodservice executives to deliver a training program for unemployed Washington area residents. With the funding of the DC Private Industry Council, who contracted with NRA to implement this program, NRA has developed a four-week training program, consisting of two weeks of classroom instruction and two weeks of field training in a full service restaurant in the metropolitan Washington area. The program is designed to give D.C. residents an opportunity to begin a career in foodservice.

Twenty-five participants—all residents of the nation's capital—have been chosen from the rosters of the DC Department of Employment Services. All are seeking full-time employment.

A restaurant industry council has been established, consisting of a dozen Washington area restaurant managers, owners, operators and foodservice educators. This advisory committee has helped select the students for the program and has helped place them in field training. It also will be instrumental in securing permanent full-time positions for all graduates.

NRA staff instructor Mark Snyder is conducting the training and administering the field training and placement phases of the program. Training consists of instruction in the skills needed to perform as a waiter, including elements of proper service, wine service, safety, order taking and suggestive selling. In addition, considerable emphasis is being placed on the importance of proper attitude, courtesy, teamwork, grooming and professionalism. The recruitment process was begun in mid-July, and the training will take place during August.

NRA leads grassroots fight

NRA is enlisting the support of all association members and their employees to fight the inequities in "Treasury II," President Reagan's tax simplification plan. If the proposed cap to business meal tax deductions is included in the final tax bill passed by Congress, it would cost restaurants $11.9 billion over the next three years, and 144,000 foodservice jobs would be lost in the first year alone.

Complete information kits for employers to use to educate their staffs have been mailed to all NRA members. The kits include three payroll stuffers and an 11 by 17 inch poster. Please encourage your employees to write Congress regarding these inequities.

Market researchers, marketing executives discuss industry trends

The future of the foodservice industry was on the mind of two NRA study groups, which met last spring—NRA's Market Research Group, which met in Washington, DC, and NRA's Marketing Executives Group, which met in Chicago, IL.

The market researchers focused on such industry trends as restaurant repositioning, franchising, meal occasion trends, current economic trends, restaurant acquisitions, Canadian eating out habits and menu item testing.

The marketing executives discussed such topics as guerrilla warfare marketing, delivery trends, ways to differentiate a restaurant concept, how to make the best use of outside public relations firms and the major demographic and lifestyle changes that are forecast to occur during the remainder of the decade.

The next meeting of the Marketing Executives Group will be October 27 to 30 in San Francisco, CA. The next meeting of the Market Research Group will be October 2 to 4 in Chicago, IL.

Any interested person from an NRA member company who would like to obtain more information on participating in these groups should contact Philip Kralovec in NRA's Chicago Office, One Park Place, Suite 2000, Chicago, IL 60601 or call (312) 853-2525.

Make Sunday, September 8 a grand day at your operation.

NRA Grandparents Day promotional materials available

Posters: The National Restaurant Association commissioned John Porter, a Washington, DC artist, to illustrate this year's Grandparents Day poster. The striking full-color, 17 by 22 inch poster will remind your customers to celebrate Grandparents Day in your operation.

Poster price: $2.00 NRA members $2.50 non-members

Table Tents: Also created by John Porter, this full-color, freestanding table tent maintains the theme and style of the poster. Space has been provided on one side of the tent for you to announce your Grandparents Day activities and specials.

Table tent price: Order in sets of 15 only—$5.00 NRA members $6.00 non-members

To receive your free Grandparents Day edition of ***PRO-Motion,*** *ask for it when you place your table tent/poster order.*

Phone orders accepted. Call in your table tent/poster order today—800/424-5156 (toll free) or 202/638-6100. They will be sent to you immediately.

For mail orders, please include name, address, method of payment (check, major credit card) and send to Grandparents Day, National Restaurant Association, 311 First St., NW, Washington, DC 20001.

Applicable taxes will be added for Washington, DC and Illinois residents.Postage and handling included in the prices above.

WASHINGTON REPORT

Final floor action pending on farm bill

Over the next few months the House and Senate will try to hammer out a new federal agriculture policy to replace the soon-to-expire 1981 farm bill.

Among the key changes likely to come out of this measure are more incentives for farmers to respond to the marketplace rather than to government subsidy programs and reductions in price support levels to accommodate budget cuts outlined in the FY 1986 budget resolution.

Both the House and Senate had hoped to finish up work on the 1985 farm bill before adjourning for their month-long August recess, but final floor action had not occurred as this ***NRA NEWS*** went to press.

Current laws governing federal agriculture support prices will expire on Sept. 30, which leaves Congress with little time to pass the omnibus legislation.

A chief concern for the lawmakers will be slowing the tremendous rise in farm support costs. Since the nation's farm programs were last reauthorized in 1981, the federal government has spent more than $60 billion on commodity programs. During the same period, farm income declined 27 percent, and exports dropped by $8 billion.

In the dairy area, for example, the House Agriculture Committee agreed in July to a new dairy program that proponents say will save $700 million next year.

The plan would create a new formula for calculating the support price at which the government buys surplus dairy commodities. The formula, which is opposed by the administration, would take into consideration the Consumer Price Index (CPI), prices received by farmers for meat animals, feed costs, interest paid by farmers, taxes and other costs.

The proposal also creates a "stand-by" diversion program designed to curb production by providing incentive payments to producers who agree to reduce milk output. The diversion program could be implemented if the government estimated its level of milk purchases in any one year would exceed five billion pounds. The cost of the program would be borne by the producers.

The House panel's plan would cost an estimated $1 billion next year, $700 million less than if the current program were continued.

The administration favors lower support prices and supported an amendment offered by House Agriculture Committee Member Rep. James Olin (D-VA) that would allow the secretary of agriculture to lower the price supports if he determined government purchases of milk products in any one year would exceed four billion pounds. The amendment was defeated in committee, 25-5.

The House dairy title also includes a provision designed to protect the price of red meat, which could drop sharply if the dairy diversion program succeeded in cutting milk output, leading in turn to an increase in slaughtered cows. The provision would require the secretary of agriculture to purchase 200 million pounds of red meat in each of the next two years.

National small business conference planned for 1986

The White House will once again sponsor a National Conference on Small Business to be held in Washington during August 1986. The conference will enable more than 1,800 small business leaders from all over the country to come together to discuss issues and problems of common concern. The delegates will develop detailed recommendations for executive and legislative action, designed to maintain and encourage the economic viability of small business.

Almost 70 foodservice industry representatives attended the last national conference, held in 1980. At that conference 11 NRA-supported proposals to aid small business were incorporated in the 60 final recommendations, which were sent to the President. More than two-thirds of those proposals have been acted on legislatively or administratively in the last five years.

Two-thirds of the delegates to the national conference will be elected at the 55 state conferences being held throughout the country. To be elected to the national conference, a delegate must have attended his or her state conference.

The state conferences will be one-day events at which small business people will discuss and vote on federal policy issues. Participants in the state conferences must be owners, partners or corporate officers of a business that employs fewer than 500 people. Participants also must attend the conference in the state in which they reside.

Approximately one-third of the delegates to the national conference will be appointed. Each senator, representative, governor and territorial executive will appoint one delegate and one alternate. The President will appoint 100 delegates and 100 alternates.

NRA strongly encourages its members to register for their state conferences. Participants in the state conferences must pay a $35 registration fee and are responsible for their own hotel, extra meals and transportation costs. To receive more information about your state conference and registration materials, write to: The White House Conference on Small Business, 1801 K Street, N.W., Suite 1101, Washington, DC, 20006.

NRA asks agencies to reject fast food labeling

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) are now considering a petition to require fast food restaurants to label their products.

In comments filed with USDA and FDA last month, NRA asked the agencies to reject the petition, stating that labeling in fast food establishments is unnecessary and impractical and would raise consumer anxiety over perfectly safe products.

The petition was submitted to the agencies on June 24 by a group of consumer organizations, including the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), the New York State Consumer Protection Board and the Food Allergy Committee of the American College of Allergists. The agencies have 180 days from the date the petition was filed to respond.

The petitioners contend that ingredient labeling is warranted because several fast food ingredients can trigger allergic reactions, including yellow food dye No. 5, corn sugar and milk solids—ingredients used in milk shakes, french fries and toppings. According to CSPI, fast food companies refuse to disclose the ingredients in their products. They conclude that, without labeling, the ingredients of fast foods remain a mystery to health-conscious consumers.

These arguments run counter to an exhaustive study completed by the FDA, USDA and Federal Trade Commission (FTC) in 1979. The study concluded that it would not be feasible to enforce labeling containers in restaurants; that labeling would increase costs for restaurateurs, which in turn would be passed on to customers; that the increased customer costs would outweigh the potential benefits of labeling and that state and local governments, not the federal government, have primary authority over restaurants.

NRA told FDA and USDA that labeling containers in fast food restaurants would be absolutely unworkable because many are used for more than one purpose. For example, a single type of paper cup may be used to serve various soft drinks and milk shakes, while generic wrappers may be used for a variety of sandwiches and hamburgers. The petition would require operators to use a different kind of cup for each beverage served or a different wrapper for each kind of sandwich served, since each product would be required to have its own ingredients label.

NRA also said that most Americans are not allergic to fast food ingredients and so the cost of mandatory labeling could not be justified. NRA added that the complexity of menu items and the fact that ingredients often change from day to day would make labeling unworkable in the foodservice setting.

NRA supports Simpson immigration reform bill

NRA has joined other business groups in supporting an immigration reform bill introduced by Sen. Alan Simpson (R-WY), the chief architect of Senate immigration reform efforts in the past two Congresses.

In testimony given earlier this summer before the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, NRA Director Ralph Evans said the senator's new bill, S. 1200, was not perfect but was "a tough, fair, political initiative, which deserves high commendation." Evans testified on behalf of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and also spoke for NRA.

Last year's immigration bill, sponsored by Simpson and U.S. Rep. Romano Mazzoli (D-KY), was nearly enacted after differing versions of it were passed by the House and Senate. However, the legislation died at the end of the session when a conference committee failed to resolve the differences.

The new Simpson bill includes employer sanctions—penalties against employers who "knowingly" hire, recruit or refer illegal aliens for employment—but it does make concessions to business groups. This makes it less onerous to employers.

Burdensome recordkeeping and verification requirements are not included in the new bill, a major reason why NRA and the Chamber of Commerce do not oppose it. The bill passed by the Senate in the last Congress would have required employers to keep records showing they had checked employee identification cards to verify a job applicant's eligibility for work.

Under the new bill, recordkeeping would be optional and would give those employers who opted for it an affirmative defense against charges of knowingly hiring illegal aliens.

NRA to hold first public affairs conference

NRA will hold its first Washington Public Affairs Conference this fall, Sept. 30 to Oct. 2, at the J.W. Marriott Hotel in Washington, DC.

Conference activities will include presentations from national leaders, panel discussions on legislative/regulatory policy, a congressional reception and the opportunity to lobby Congress on restaurant issues.

House Majority Leader Jim Wright (D-TX), Minority Whip Trent Lott (R-MS), Deputy Assistant to the President Linda Chavez and ABC White House Correspondent Sam Donaldson are just some of the speakers who will be featured.

The conference is designed to provide foodservice operators with an understanding of how government affects their business, to inform members of Congress and key government officials about foodservice issues and to provide an opportunity for restaurateurs to meet national lawmakers face to face.

Information concerning registration and hotel accommodations will be mailed to NRA members. For additional information, contact the NRA government relations department, (800) 424-5156.

Interview

Agriculture Secretary Block discusses farm bill

Recently ***NRA NEWS*** *talked to Agriculture Secretary John R. Block about pending farm legislation. Block has served in President Reagan's Cabinet since 1981. A farmer himself, Block served as Director of Agriculture for Illinois prior to being named Agriculture Secretary.*

NRA NEWS: **When the administration's farm bill was unveiled earlier this year, its "market-oriented" approach was considered too radical by many. Why all the changes from the 1981 farm bill?**

BLOCK: The 1981 bill was out of step with the times. It had entirely too much government regimentation in it, and it wasn't flexible enough to deal with deflationary times and surpluses. We wanted something flexible, something that would endure, something that would let the market system work. We felt our bill would do that.

Q: How is the administration's bill faring in Congress? Earlier this year many in Congress termed it "dead on arrival."

A: I believe the philosophical battle has been won by the administration. The market-oriented position—that we need to price products in a way that makes us competitive in international trade—is broadly accepted now in both the House and Senate.

Another very critical issue is the cost of our farm programs, and there I'd have to say Congress is willing to spend more money than we had suggested. Still, there is an expectation that support levels will be phased out and government involvement in agriculture will be reduced.

Q: How will this philosophical victory be translated into actual program changes? Will we see reductions in price supports?

A: Yes, we will. Commodity prices will drop dramatically. This will occur as a result of lower support prices, which in turn will put the market system in operation and make us more competitive. Farmers will still be eligible for income maintenance programs to ease the pain from such an abrupt reduction, but these income transfer payments will be phased down over a period of years.

Agriculture Secretary John R. Block

Q: If commodity prices come down dramatically, won't that have an adverse effect on those farmers who are already feeling the pinch of falling agriculture prices?

A: I don't think it will be a devastating problem. There will still be income transfer payments. Because of the severe stress in the farm economy, that's one point that is being insisted upon. Farmers still get their deficiency payments.

Q: Last winter we heard a lot about the "farm crisis"—falling land prices, falling farm income and bankruptcies. Are those problems still with us?

A: There have been a lot of adjustments in the agricultural sector—farmers have sold property and changed their operations, and many farmers and their wives have found part-time jobs. Interest rates have started to come down for some, but these problems aren't behind us yet. The problems this coming year could be just as severe as they were last year, if not worse.

Q: What will the new farm bill's effect be on wholesale and retail prices?

A: Wholesale prices initially will be somewhat lower because grain will be somewhat lower-priced. That will have a moderating influence on the price of livestock.

However, in three to four years prices will generally be higher because the government won't be providing quite as much subsidy. Farmers, of necessity, will then be getting their income out of the marketplace and not from the government. When that happens, it means the prices of commodities—and consumer prices—will be modestly higher.

Q: Our members have a keen interest in the dairy provision of the farm bill. The House appears to favor a dairy diversion program that would assess farmers if they produce more than their allotted quotas. What is the administration's position?

A: We are adamantly opposed to dairy diversion-type programs and programs that would build some kind of quotas into the dairy industry. Our approach is to systematically lower the price support until supply and demand come into line.

Although Congress doesn't seem to favor this approach, we haven't given up.

Q: Do you think diversion will be part of the final bill?

A: No. I don't think the Senate will go for diversion. We're going to insist that the final bill that goes to the President not have a diversion plan in it.

Q: A requirement that imported meat be labeled, including in restaurants, has surfaced again during the debate on farm legislation. What are its prospects? The administration has not supported it.

A: We live in a global world, and this kind of thing just invites retaliation by other countries. You have to remember, we export more than we import.

—Jay Morris and Dennis Clark

Editor's note: *See related story elsewhere in this department.*

THE BOARD ROOM

Balestreri testifies before the House Ways and Means Committee

NRA President Ted J. Balestreri testifies before the House Ways and Means Committee against capping business marketing meal deductions.

NRA President Ted Balestreri let Congress know where NRA stands on the controversial issue of capping the deduction for the business marketing meal when he testified before the House Ways and Means Committee.

Balestreri said NRA opposes any restrictions on the business meal deduction, which under the President's tax reform plan would be held to $25 per meal, with a 50 percent deduction allowed for amounts that exceed the cap. Balestreri said the business meal is a legitimate marketing expense and that it would be unfair to single it out for arbitrary restrictions.

The cap would have a devastating effect on the restaurant industry, Balestreri told the tax-writing committee. According to a Chase Econometrics study conducted for NRA, 144,000 foodservice jobs and $3.5 billion in restaurant sales would be lost in the first year of the proposal's enactment. Balestreri also noted that there would be a $6 billion loss in state, local and federal tax revenue over three years due to decreasing personal income tax receipts and increasing welfare payments.

Balestreri reminded the committee that the foodservice industry employs more teens, women and minorities than any other industry. He suggested that "these are members of our society least able to withstand economic dislocation" which would result from capping the business meal.

In protesting the unfairness of the President's plan, the NRA president noted that other business marketing expenses, such as newspaper and television ads, are not subject to any constraints.

Joining Balestreri in testifying before the Ways and Means Committee were representatives from the American Hotel and Motel Association, the International Foodservice Distributors Association and the National Club Association. Also testifying in opposition to the business meal cap were members of the House Travel and Tourism Caucus.

NRA has also been working with the state restaurant associations to arrange meetings with Ways and Means Committee members and restaurateurs in their districts to discuss the proposed cap.

Meetings with House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dan Rostenkowski (D-IL), Ranking Minority Member John Duncan (R-TN) and committee members Andrew Jacobs (D-IN), Charles Rangel (D-NY), Jim Jones (D-OK) and Don Pease (D-OH) were held over the 4th of July congressional recess. More meetings are planned for the August congressional recess.

—Jay Morris

Balestreri speaks out on fast food labeling in *USA TODAY*

NRA President Ted J. Balestreri (Sardine Factory, Monterey, CA) expressed his views on the mandatory labeling of packaged fast food on the June 28, 1985 op-ed page of *USA Today*.

"Too often," Balestreri said, "reading a product label is like taking a crash course in chemistry without benefit of the teacher. Labeling a menu item with a lot of technical terms that may be, and probably are, unfamiliar to the consumer, creates confusion and raises the specter of fear without any reason for it."

Balestreri called the foods consumed in today's restaurants "healthful," and already subject to inspection requirements by federal and state regulatory agencies. He reminded readers that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) decided not to extend content labeling of packaged foods to restaurants in 1979 on the ground that such a system was unworkable in the restaurant industry where menu items and ingredients vary daily.

As a case in point, he focused on the multi-purpose container in frequent use in the fast food industry. "If mandatory labeling on packaged fast food items were instituted, one type of container could only be used for one type of menu item," he said. "In addition to presenting operational difficulties, this would severely impair the economies of scale for fast food owners, which would result in higher prices to consumers."

Despite his opposition to labeling, Balestreri said that all consumers, especially the allergy-sensitive or those on restricted diets for health reasons, have a right to know the ingredients in a menu item they are about to purchase. The National Restaurant Association recommends that patrons with health-oriented concerns contact the headquarters of fast food companies for ingredient information.

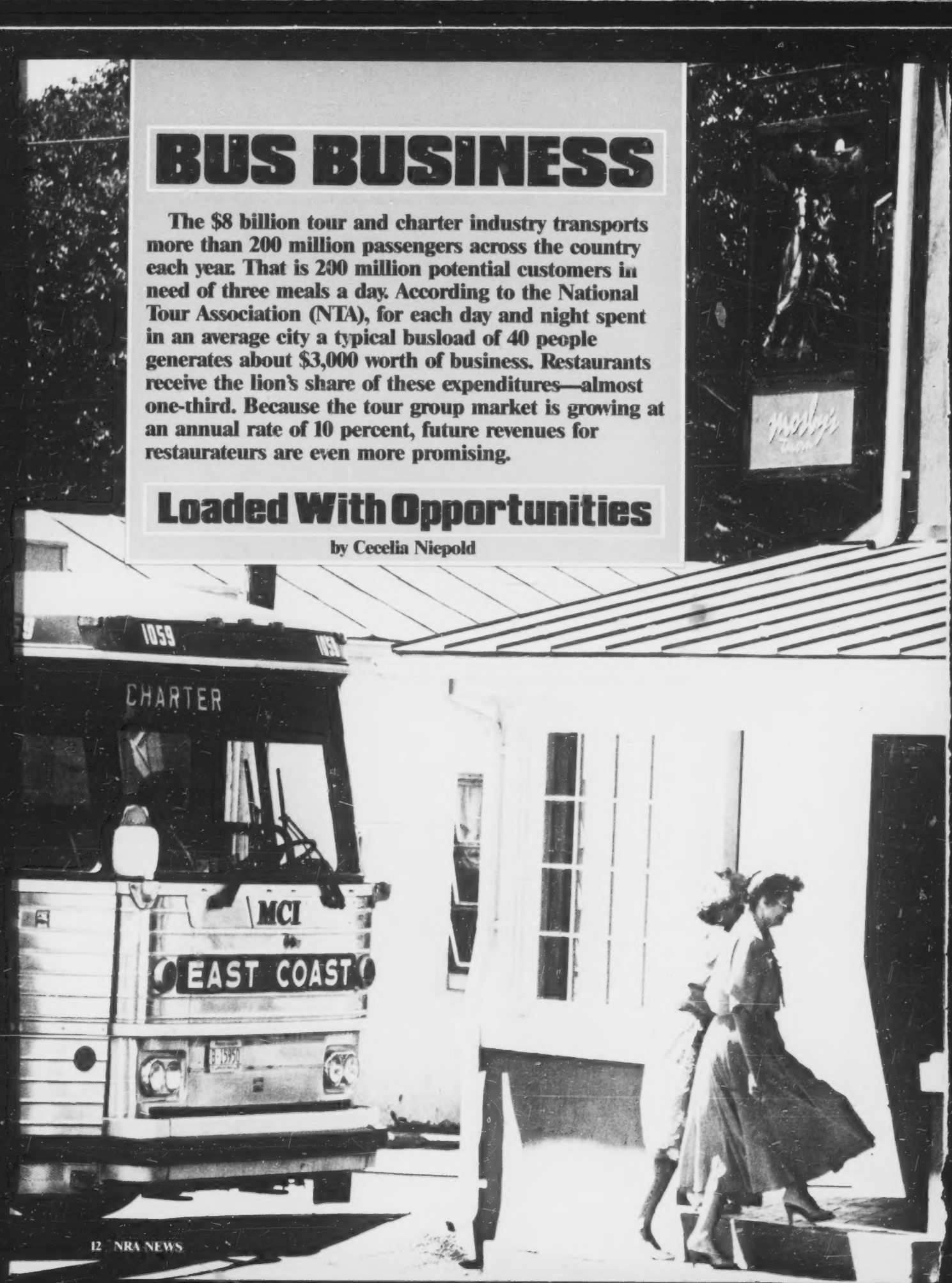
—Dorothy Dee

BUS BUSINESS

The $8 billion tour and charter industry transports more than 200 million passengers across the country each year. That is 200 million potential customers in need of three meals a day. According to the National Tour Association (NTA), for each day and night spent in an average city a typical busload of 40 people generates about $3,000 worth of business. Restaurants receive the lion's share of these expenditures—almost one-third. Because the tour group market is growing at an annual rate of 10 percent, future revenues for restaurateurs are even more promising.

Loaded With Opportunities

by Cecelia Niepold



"The group business has really saved my life. I needed the extra business at night," vouches Mack Meiner, owner of Cafe Society, a 200-seat art deco cafe in Orlando, FL. Although the restaurant did a bustling lunch trade, few local customers came downtown at night. Business looked pretty grim until a tour operator asked Meiner if he would seat a motorcoach group for dinner. The visit went well and opened a whole new market for the restaurant. Up to six groups now visit nightly, filling the previously empty seats.

Restaurateurs sometimes overlook the group market, assuming that tour operators only patronize certain types of eating establishments. In fact, opportunities abound for all kinds of restaurants. Tour operators, like most consumers, search out different types of restaurants for different itineraries and price ranges. For instance, tour coordinators may choose a charming New England inn during a fall foliage tour, a cafe with entertainment for a lively evening or a roadside cafeteria for a quick lunch break.

Who's in the group tour business? . . .

The variety of restaurants doing business with group tours is diverse. That in itself underscores the potential of the market. Here is a sampling of some of the many different types of establishments:

- *The Brookville Hotel* (Brookville, KS), a 115-year-old, 200-seat restaurant that serves family-style fried chicken dinners in a town of only 250 residents.
- *Windows on the World* (New York City, NY), a diverse, sophisticated operation with 2,000 seats, located on the top of the World Trade Center.
- *S & W Cafeteria* (Alexandria, VA), a 448-seat cafeteria that depends on tour group business for 20 percent of its sales.
- *The Pink House* (Savannah, GA), a small, seven-room mansion with only 86 seats that serves a taste of the Old South in elegant surroundings.
- *Shoney's* (Nashville, TN), a 433-unit, family-style restaurant chain, located throughout the U.S.
- *Plain and Fancy Farm* (Bird-in-Hand, PA), a Pennsylvania Dutch restaurant that serves 48 percent of its family-style meals to group customers.

Benefits of the tour group market . . .

The benefits of the tour group business are as varied as the types of restaurants serving this market:

Increased traffic: A top advantage cited by restaurateurs is that the motorcoach trade helps bring in customers. It can help fill a Southern-style restaurant in a small Kentucky town or boost sales in a metropolitan restaurant during slow seasons. Wherever they go, tour groups increase table turns since the groups are generally in and out quickly to meet their itineraries. Moreover, they help keep chairs full. "Motorcoach groups give me maximum utility from my tables. Instead of placing parties of two at a table for four, we use every available chair for groups and often end up with seven at our sixes," maintains Don Keller, director of sales and marketing for the 1,200-seat Frankenmuth Bavarian Inn (Frankenmuth, MI).

"I like to think we end up with 50,000 'walking-talking' billboards throughout the U.S. and Canada each year via satisfied motorcoach groups, at virtually no cost to us."

Improved planning: Service and food costs also can be planned more effectively because operators usually know in advance—often several months before—how many people are arriving at a specific time. "I don't have 10 waiters or waitresses standing around wondering how busy we're going to be," says Mack Meiner.

Filling slow periods: Motorcoach groups often even out the daily ebb and flow of customer traffic. Tour operators will frequently agree to come in during "off periods" between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. and before and after the lunch rush. Often they prefer these periods because they are able to get faster service.

Adding meal periods: Sometimes tour groups can inspire an operator to add a meal period. Although the Brookville Hotel used to serve only dinner, owner Mark Martin found it profitable to open his doors to tour groups for lunch. Similarly, Morrison's, a 148-unit cafeteria chain based in Mobile, AL, is considering opening for breakfast for groups of 40 or more.

Less crowded parking: Outside facilities can be maximized with tour group business since one motorcoach with 40 diners takes up between four and five parking spaces while 40 "off-the-street" customers generally arrive in 12 to 15 cars.

Word-of-mouth advertising: Motorcoach customers also can provide word-of-mouth advertising. As Don Keller explains, "I like to think that we end up with 50,000 'walking-talking' billboards throughout the U.S. and Canada each year via satisfied motorcoach groups at virtually no cost to us."

Operational factors to consider . . .

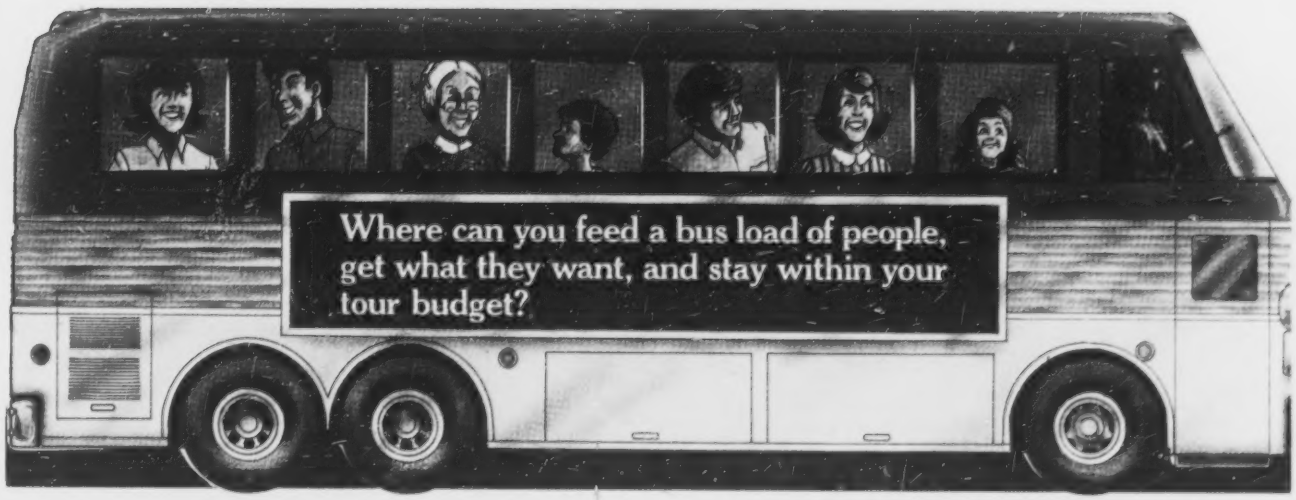
Although the advantages are many, restaurateurs should develop definite policies and programs to successfully reap the benefits of the motorcoach trade. Here are some of the major factors to consider when putting together a group tour program.

Menu development. Carefully think through your operation's capabilities when developing a group menu program. What sort of program will be most adaptable to your kitchen and still provide efficient service?

Restaurateurs have developed menu options that range from extensive group packages to no set menu at all. For instance, Hogate's (a 500-seat restaurant in Washington, DC) has developed five different group menus in a wide price range. Tour operators choose two entrees out of five or six choices from one menu and then let customers pick between the two. To prepare adequately for the groups, Hogate's requires a food count 48 hours prior to arrival.

At the other end of the spectrum, the Bethel Inn (Bethel, ME) does not have a set group menu. The 230-seat quaint New England inn gives tour members full choice of the menu. "Initially we did have a pre-set menu but found it was not to people's liking," says Gretchen Davidson, assistant manager. So far the policy hasn't caused any problems in the kitchen or backups in the dining room. Tour members are consistently in and out within an hour and a half. "The menu

"The menu is prepared by the chef to work well in the kitchen, and we add staff in both the kitchen and the dining room when groups come in."



is prepared by the chef to work well in the kitchen, and we add staff in both the kitchen and the dining room when groups come in," explains Davidson.

A common alternative is for restaurateurs to encourage tour operators to make one choice for the whole group. This helps the kitchen prepare for the group in advance. If a group member doesn't like the chosen entree, however, an alternative should be quickly provided. For example, during one recent tour a restaurateur exchanged a top sirloin for prime ribs because the customer wasn't satisfied. "That's over and above what's necessary, but you better believe that's where I'll go when I go back to that city," maintains Jim Davis, president of Jim Davis Tours (Ft. Lauderdale, FL).

Pricing policies. Most tour operators like to know in advance how much meals will cost so they can build these costs into their overall package price. Generally that price should include tax and gratuity and should be priced lower than off-the-street business. Many restaurateurs also offer complimentary meals to drivers and tour escorts as a marketing incentive when developing a group rate. Be sure to carefully consider your costs. Don't underprice your services. As H. L. Crisp, manager of the S & W Cafeteria advises, "You have to give them a price that's attractive to them, but it's got to be a price you can live with."

Some operators set an average price no matter what the customer orders from the regular menu. Others develop price packages, which can tie in with different price tours. Windows on the World is an example of the latter alternative. The package choices range from "Tea and Pastry" (a snack and a trip to the top of the World Trade Center) for economy-minded tours and school groups to a deluxe dinner featuring seven courses de-

For more information

If you would like more information about the group tour market, here are two associations that can help. Both organizations offer valuable marketing aids as well as opportunities to make contact with tour operators.

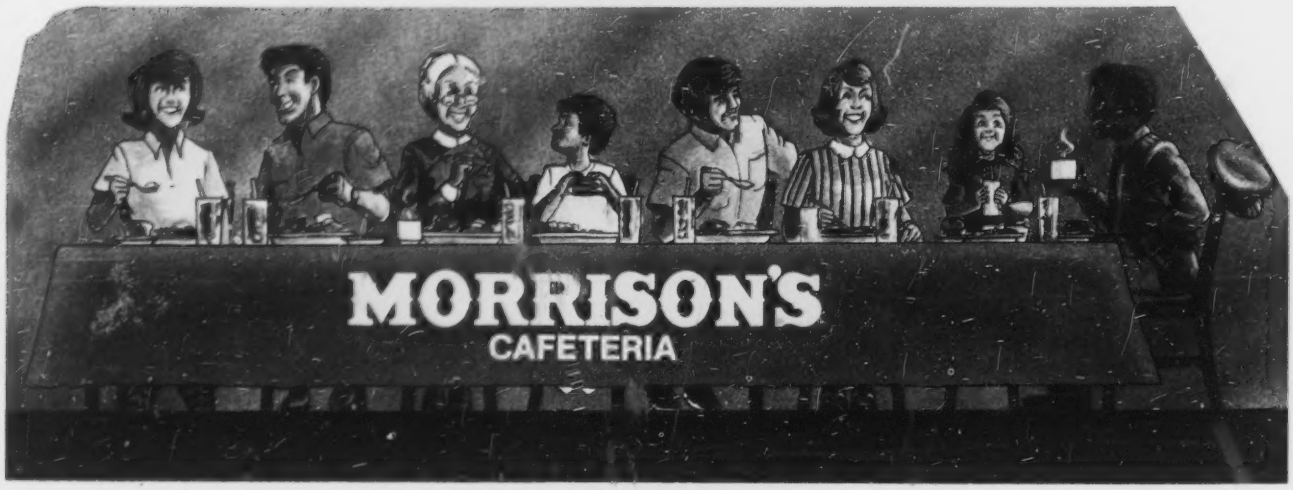
The National Tour Association (NTA) has close to 3,000 members involved in the tour and charter industry. Around 600 members are tour operators. The remainder are suppliers, such as restaurants, hotels, airlines and bus companies. Each year the association organizes the Tour and Travel Exchange, where members from all sectors of the industry meet to exchange information and set up itineraries. This year's exchange will be held during the annual convention available to association members in November in Reno, NV. Other helpful marketing tools include a comprehensive marketing manual as well as tour operator and tour supplier directories.

The American Bus Association (ABA) has 3,500 members, 800 of which are bus companies that put together tours. The association also hosts an annual exchange meeting, the Marketplace, that pairs suppliers (like restaurants) with bus companies to arrange tour packages. This year's meeting will be held in Kansas City in December. The association also works closely with state bus associations and can help restaurateurs make contacts in different areas of the country.

For further information contact:

- National Tour Association, 120 Kentucky Avenue, Lexington, KY 40502; (606) 253-1036.
- American Bus Association, 1025 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20036; (202) 293-5890.

"Motorcoach groups give me maximum utility from my tables. Instead of placing parties of two at a table for four, we use every available chair for groups and often end up with seven at our sixes."



signed around five different wines.

It's a good idea to develop a pricing policy for last-minute cancellations. Some operators require non-refundable deposits of a set amount. Others bill tour operators a percentage (or even the full amount) of the total cost of a package if a group doesn't show up. Once you develop a policy, make sure tour operators realize how far ahead of time they have to cancel to avoid penalty charges.

Service and employee relations. Tour operators look for top-notch service. "One of the things we ask is if a restaurant is willing to put on extra help to get our group through in the shortest possible time," maintains Patrick Marks, vice president of Nationwide Travelers Club (Appleton, WI).

Operators not only look for efficiency, they also look for friendly service. That is why the initial greeting is very important. "Sometimes we walk in and the reaction is 'Oh, no, the tour group is here,' " observes Jim Davis. Obviously, that kind of attitude doesn't make a good impression and can shut the door on your tour group business. Often the problem is that employees are not aware that their tips are included in the tour package price. When restaurateurs let their employees know that they will receive their fair share of the bill, employee attitudes improve considerably.

Good communication with tour escorts can also help tighten up your service. Encourage tour operators to let you know ahead of time if there are any passengers with special dietary needs or mobility restrictions. This will help with food preparation as well as seating arrangements.

And never discuss business matters in front of the group. This could embarrass the operator and turn business away from your restaurant.

Juggling regular customers and group visitors. Unfortunately, local customers may be intimidated by the sight of a bus in your parking lot because they assume they will have to wait a long time for service.

The best answer is to carefully schedule motorcoach groups so neither they nor your local customers will get caught in a service bottleneck. Some solutions include

- opening an hour earlier,
- spacing reservations from local customers or
- blocking off a special section of the dining room for the tour groups during the day when group traffic is heaviest.

One thing to avoid is to automatically seat tour groups in a secluded banquet room. Tour members enjoy sitting in main dining areas. "It's nice to mix in with the regular customers. Local color is always fun, and people enjoy learning about the area," says Pete Anderson, director of trade relations for Maupintours, Inc. (Lawrence, KS).

Good communication between tour operators and restaurateurs is essential to make schedules work. Develop a definite reservation confirmation policy. Make sure tour operators know how important timing is to you and encourage them to call if they're going to be late. At Hogate's, during the prime tourist season, management warns tour operators they may not be seated if they are more than 15 minutes late and have not called.

Attracting the business . . .

Once you know you can handle motorcoach tours, you have to convince tour operators to visit your establishment. That means developing a specialized marketing plan that balances some basic requirements with your own unique characteristics. To attract business, every operator should:

Find out as much as possible about the tour group market. Look at customer profiles. According to the National Tour Association, average tour members are well-educated senior citizens in the middle to upper-middle income range, living in metropolitan areas. But not all tour passengers are over 50. Be sure to check with each individual operator for a specific tour profile. For instance,

Mark Fischer, assistant to the president of East Coast Parlor Car Tours, books tours for church groups and youth organizations as well as senior citizens.

Next, think about the kinds of things tour operators look for and how your restaurant can fill those needs. As Julia Ford, promotions manager for the retail division at Morrison's, explains, "You have to help tour operators understand how coming to your restaurant will help their business." To review, some top priorities for tour operators are

- *Convenient locations* with "easy in, easy out" access.
- *Efficient, fast and friendly service* (many operators look for restaurants that can serve an entire group in 60 to 90 minutes).
- *A pre-set price* that includes tax and tip.
- *Menu flexibility*, including a variety of entrees and substitutions if required.

Consider your operation's strong points and focus on them. If you are located near a highway, play up that fact. If you specialize in fast service, let tour operators know just how quickly you can get customers in and out.

Create an image. To make tours memorable, tour operators often go out of their way to visit a restaurant that has a unique atmosphere, is historically significant, is representative of a particular area or offers entertainment as part of the meal package.

For instance, tour operators enjoy taking groups to the Brookville Hotel because it gives passengers a taste of the Old West. Visitors can wander through the hotel rooms, which are still filled with period furniture, and can marvel at Buffalo Bill's signature in the guest book. Le Festin du Gouverneur (Montreal, Quebec, Canada) is also an adventure into history. Located in an old fort, the restaurant treats diners to a realistic re-enactment of a 17th century banquet as well as a four-course authentic Canadian meal.

On the other hand, the Bethel Inn is a popular stop during fall foliage tours. Located at the base of the White Mountains, the inn is a perfect example of a traditional New England country inn. And The Plain and Fancy Farm offers visitors a taste of local Pennsylvania Dutch customs along with a hearty meal. Customers can take buggy rides, visit an original Amish house or browse through a doll museum.

Entertainment doesn't have to be elaborate, however, to appeal to groups. At Mack Meiner's Cafe Society a piano player entertains nightly and sing-alongs are encouraged. "The people love it," he observes.

Develop the little extras. Creating signature items or "extras" also will make your restaurant more appealing to tour operators.

For instance, Steve Hayden markets The Old Stable as "Your Kentucky Connection." He arranges additional excursions for tour operators throughout the area, taking care of such details as room reservations, guide services and sightseeing. Hayden benefits because groups end up visiting The Old Stable for more than one meal. "We have groups that spend up to five meals with us," he says proudly. To encourage the multiple meal business, he also provides a variety of programs, such as hayrides, fish fries and picnics.

H. L. Crisp at the S & W Cafeteria provides another kind of service for tour operators. Operators don't always have enough time to stop at a restaurant between sights during the day. Crisp offers a solution for this situation by providing box lunches to tour groups. This often benefits his business in more ways than one since groups generally arrange to stop by for breakfast and pick up the boxes. Developing a box lunch program is an efficient marketing strategy since it requires no additional overhead, doesn't disrupt regular customer traffic and is definitely a popular feature with tour operators.

Sometimes it's just a small touch that makes a restaurant special. For instance, the Bethel Inn offers every group member a Macintosh apple, a guide to the area and a selection of favorite recipes so they'll remember the inn. Mack Meiner personally gives every female guest a red rose before she departs. It's a personal touch that customers do not forget.

Developing the tools . . .

Once you've carefully researched the market and have decided how you want to highlight your restaurant, you have to market your operation.

First of all, decide whom you want to contact. Tour companies, travel agents, church groups, local civic groups, retirement associations and youth groups are just a few to consider. Remember, sometimes groups finalize tours a year ahead of time.

Associations that specialize in group travel can be another helpful source of contacts. (See accompanying box.) Many states have bus associations that also can provide valuable information. For instance, if you know a lot of your visitors come from Pennsylvania, contact the Pennsylvania Bus Association. Also be in touch with your chamber of commerce to find out when industry trade shows occur in your area. Consider other materials that operators might read. H. L. Crisp, for example, says much of his business comes from his cafeteria's description in *The Mobile Travel Guide*.

When preparing promotional materials—whether brochures, newspaper ads or direct mail—be sure to include: a map with directions to your restaurant, a sample group menu, group prices, a thorough description of reservation and cancellation policies and a reply card to encourge requests for further information.

In sum . . .

The group tour trade offers a great deal of potential for all kinds of restaurants. ❑

Create your own tour

Don't just be a stop along the way. Make your restaurant part of an actual tour. Tour groups sometimes offer tours that specifically highlight restaurants. Create your own tour. Band together with other restaurants in your area and market yourselves as a destination.

Promote a special form of cooking or market an unusual historic atmosphere or locale. For instance, Maupintours once put together a "Gourmet Italy" tour. Tour members visited a number of different Italian restaurants and went behind the scenes to watch the chefs at work.

The Society for Commercial Archeology, on the other hand, arranged a tour of historical diners in the Boston area where passengers could learn about the architectural features of a bygone era while enjoying the characteristically filling food.

CUSTOMER SAFETY

PROTECTING YOUR MOST IMPORTANT ASSET

by Kathy Boyle

- ***One of your customers is choking on a piece of food.***
- ***A bomb threat comes over the telephone.***
- ***There is a fire in the kitchen.***

In the face of these and many other emergencies, is your operation ready to safeguard customers?

In the relaxed away-from-it-all atmosphere of a restaurant, customers rarely worry about their safety. But the potential for fire, slips, falls and choking on food are real safety hazards a restaurant operator must look out for each day. A good safety program starts during the construction phases with good safety design and proper installation of detectors. It does not end there, however. A thorough safety program should include safety rules and practices, employee training, safety inspections of facilities and equipment and, most importantly, corrective action when safety hazards are spotted.

Fire safety . . .

No other restaurant hazard is as great a threat to a customer's life as a fire. The loss of almost 500 lives in the Coconut Grove Nite Club fire in Boston in 1942 was shocking evidence of that danger. Since that time, attention has been focused on the need for adequate restaurant exits, fire prevention equipment and techniques and a well-thought out evacuation plan, which is rehearsed often.

Restaurateurs are usually well aware of fire prevention in the construction stages of business because they must comply with local fire codes when installing detectors, sprinklers or certain classes of extinguishers.

But once the restaurant is open, they often ignore out-of-the-way areas. Rooms where burners or hot water heaters are located may become the storeplace for order forms, receipts and soiled linens and aprons. Stored next to a furnace or water heater, sooner or later, these items become a fire hazard. Good housekeeping in these less obvious areas can prevent a costly fire, especially since more than half the reported restaurant fires start when the operation is closed.

Employee training is another critical step to making a restaurant safe, especially fire safe. Training teaches managers and their staffs to recognize hazards they may otherwise ignore, such as a stack of cardboard boxes sitting in a hallway. According to William English, director of loss control for the Marriott Corporation's restaurants (Washington, DC), "Training is the best accident preventative. No one knows why for sure, but the more people are trained, the less accidents they have."

Most restaurants cover some form of fire prevention training on the job, either by providing a training manual or by making audiovisual presentations. Ken Albrecht, director of risk management for Pizza Hut (Wichita, KS) explains that his company's audiovisual fire prevention training "not only specifically identifies what kind of equipment to use and when but also trains when to get out."

Randy Walter, director of safety and security for S & A Restaurant Corporation (Dallas, TX) has had great success building employee interest in fire prevention by inviting the local fire department to make a presentation in the restaurant and, in some cases,

providing actual hands-on fire extinguishing training. Although most fire departments are more than willing to speak before any group at no charge, operators usually have to provide the extinguishers for employees to use during training. "We try to schedule these training sessions on a day when our extinguishers are ready to be recharged," says Walter. "In this way, we cut down on the expense of training since we would have to recharge the extinguishers anyway."

Marriott's William English doesn't believe training should include fire extinguishing because "after years of experience, I believe that it takes a certain kind of person to function effectively in the face of an actual fire. It takes a lot of practice, and I'm not sure with the turnover in the restaurant industry anybody can afford to have trained people capable of putting out a fire. Effective training requires actual fire extinguishing."

Slips and falls . . .

Although a fire may pose the most life threatening danger to customers, slips and falls are the most common hazards within the restaurant. Customers, unfamiliar with the restaurant layout, can easily slip and fall. Employee knowledge of safety can really pay off in eliminating easy to spot hazards, such as spilled salad dressing, a slippery lobby floor just after a rainstorm or a torn carpet. Safety-alert employees create an atmosphere of safety because they don't want to get hurt either.

Good supervision is an essential part of safety training. Is the manager right behind the employee to make sure that spills are cleaned up quickly? Is there adequate staffing, especially during busy times? If employees are rushed, they will cut corners or ignore dangers which could lead to an accident.

A restaurant's interior design can also create hazards. If safety experts had their way, all restaurants would be located on one floor with absolutely no steps. Obviously, not all restaurant concepts easily lend themselves to a one-level design. A good first step in checking for slip and fall design hazards is to critically look at the various up-and-down levels of your restaurant. Are customers always falling on the same two steps which go up to a cozy alcove? If so, can a [illegible] be added? Is there ade[illegible]lighting? A warning sign? Do employees alert customers to the impending steps?

A more difficult design hazard is the restaurant's less noticeable up-and-down levels, such as the demarcation between a carpet and tiles or wood floors. "Even that half-inch difference between the carpet and tile can create problems for customers," says Dee Clingman, vice president of quality control for Red Lobster (Orlando, FL). "Sometimes we can eliminate the hazard by carpeting the lobby as well. Other times, the solution is not that easy. We may have to increase lighting in these areas or paint the strip between the carpet and tile a bright, contrasting color."

Proper recordkeeping of customer falls can alleviate many problems at a later date. Clingman recommends recording the events surrounding an accident immediately. Interview witnesses. Ask, "Who was hurt? What happened? What do the witnesses remember about the person who fell? Was he/she inebriated? Were the shoes rubber-soled, or did they have spiked heels or cleats?" Get this information down in writing immediately before employees forget or witnesses are gone. Most importantly, eliminate the hazard, if there was one, so someone else doesn't get hurt.

Employee safety committees . . .

If given the opportunity, employees gladly participate in a restaurant's safety program. At units of the S & A Restaurant Corporation, employee safety committees are the norm. Committee members represent all parts of the operation—kitchen, serving staff, cashiers and maintenance. They meet once a month on company time to do a full safety check of the unit. They begin the check in the parking lot, enter the front door, scrutinize every room in the building and go out the back, thus checking the whole system. Hazards are prioritized by A, B and C. "A" signifies imminent danger, "B" means hazard is to be corrected in 30 days and "C" [illegible]tifies a problem where there is no [illegible]diate dang[illegible] where the problem should be corrected within 60 days. Later, a committee representative sits down with the manager to actually negotiate the order in which problems will be corrected. Walker says proudly, "The employees themselves designed the safety checklist, and I couldn't have designed it better myself."

Safety groups exist in corporate offices as well. Jim Marshall, insurance and safety manager for the McDonald's Corporation (Oak Brook, IL), says that his company's safety committee includes staff from the following departments: engineering, construction, operations, legal, insurance, personnel and training. The committee becomes involved in the full scope of safety problems—from construction to training.

No other restaurant hazard is as great a threat to a customer's life as a fire.

Parking lot safety . . .

"In the parking lot, the key to safety lies in the design," says William English of Marriott. Look at the design for human factors." For example, although a restaurant may want to include ramps for the handicapped, it may want to discourage able-bodied patrons from using them since they tend to trip and fall on the ramps.

A common parking lot hazard are the wheel stops originally designed to keep motorists from driving into the restaurant. Although they have succeeded in their goal, they have also become a source for numerous customer falls. "For new lots," says English, "I want a good reason for a wheel stop. If it is just to keep a customer from driving into a tree, then let's make the tree planter wider." If the blocks are absolutely necessary, Dee Clingman of Red Lobster suggests painting the blocks in a bright, contrasting color.

Cracks and potholes also receive widespread attention. According to Albrecht of Pizza Hut, there is more at stake than safety when it comes to repairing these problems. "We're very tough on parking lot maintenance, fixing potholes and deteriorating areas quickly. It is the first perception of our [illegible]ant."

Dripping oil from customer cars is an ongoing problem with not much of a solution. A sudden rainstorm on the oil, in combination with people running from their cars to get out of the rain, invites slips and falls. There are chemicals to clean the oil, but their effectiveness is not guaranteed.

Proper illumination is crucial for preventing falls, but lighting poles must be checked regularly to make sure their electrical wiring is not exposed, or they could create their own hazard.

First aid . . .

Restaurants generally keep a standard first aid kit on hand. Some also train their managers in first aid procedures. At Red Lobster, managers receive 15 hours of first aid instruction. At Marriott, managers work toward a Red Cross First Aid Certificate. This training includes cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and instruction in the Heimlich maneuver.

Even if an operation does not have a formal training program, many restaurants teach their employees the Heimlich maneuver since choking from food is one of the more likely first aid emergencies. Pizza Hut's Ken Albrecht says, "We're not skittish about helping someone if they make no sound and use the universal sign of hand at the throat. I can't tell you the number of times the maneuver was used and successful." Albrecht had only to read from a recent company employee newsletter, "Waitress' hug saves boy's life," to prove his point.

For most other types of first aid emergencies, restaurateurs share the philosophy of George Hill, Jr. director of employee services for United Inns in Memphis, TN: "Get them PDQ to the doctor or hospital." This means emergency numbers must be posted near the phone. Emergency numbers should be checked periodically to make sure they are still accurate.

Out-of-the-ordinary emergencies . . .

Procedures should be in place as well for more unusual emergencies, such as hurricanes and bomb threats. Red Lobster developed a *Disaster Preparedness Training Manual* for such situations. The manual now serves as the backbone of company safety programs. It presents detailed procedures for coping with hurricanes, floods, earthquakes and a long list of other potential disasters. According to Clingman, "The manual has saved countless headaches. In the case of a hurricane, we know from experience we probably won't have any power," says Clingman, "so the manual lists names and numbers of refrigerated and frozen truck operators. With this information in hand, Red Lobster managers can quickly arrange for a refrigerated truck to protect our expensive inventory." The phone numbers in the manual are rechecked every 60 to 90 days to make sure they are accurate.

"There have been cases where we've been able to help the community by being ready," says Clingman. In the winter of 1980 when Chicago had record snowfalls, Red Lobster provided free coffee and soup to road crews. "Although we didn't plan it that way, since we were serving free coffee and soup we were the first ones to have our parking lots and roads cleared," notes Clingman, "so we were open for business long before our competitors."

In case of a bomb threat, the basic plan for most restaurants is to notify the police. "You must assume the caller is telling the truth. You don't know if it's a prank," warns Clingman. Depending on the restaurant's policy, staff may do an initial search. If the restaurant does begin its own search, usually trash is emptied and suspended ceilings, particularly in rest rooms, are searched.

Some restaurants instruct staff most likely to answer the phone about procedures to follow. The major directives are to be attentive, to keep the caller on the phone, to try to pass the call to the manager and to listen for any peculiarities in the caller's voice or any background noises that may either identify the caller or the location of the call.

A program of constant vigilance . . .

Safety inspections are a necessary maintenance step of any safety program. Jim Puzan, manager of quality assurance for Rodeway Inns (Dallas, TX), says that each of the 143 Rodeway Inn properties are inspected every six months to make sure all procedures are being followed.

The employee safety committee is one way to inspect the property for hazards but not the only method. Area supervisors are also used as are outside auditors.

Some restaurateurs use their insurance company to point out weaknesses and often this is a free service for policyholders. The loss control representative analyzes the property for dangers and recommends methods of improving the operation's safety program. Some insurance carriers make this service available to nonpolicyholders as well—for a fee. The fee for the service is usually about $50 to $60 an hour. An inspection typically takes between 10 to 20 hours. If, however, a restaurateur has a specific problem or interest, such as slips and falls, the number of hours spent in inspection can be considerably shorter.

In sum . . .

Obviously, there is no one, quick cure to prevent customer accidents, but safety committees, manuals, training, speakers and inspections are all part of a well-run safety program. ❑

What a safety program includes

- A strong statement of policy and continued support from the foodservice operator.
- The people, dollars and equipment to perform the safety functions.
- Rules for safe work practices, including equipment and facility maintenance.
- Clearly defined responsibilities for implementing safety activities. There must not be a misunderstanding as to what may be expected from each individual.
- Effective enforcement of safety rules that have been established for equipment operation and maintenance, maintenance of facilities and proper work practices.
- Continual educational and training efforts as well as recognition and reward activities.
- Responsibility for risk management, and an overall loss control program, including insurance programs.
- Procedures to collect safety information, such as accident data, to identify problems.
- A course of action to resolve the identified problem.

—NRA Safety Manual

EMPLOYEE SAFETY

Ensuring a hazard-free environment

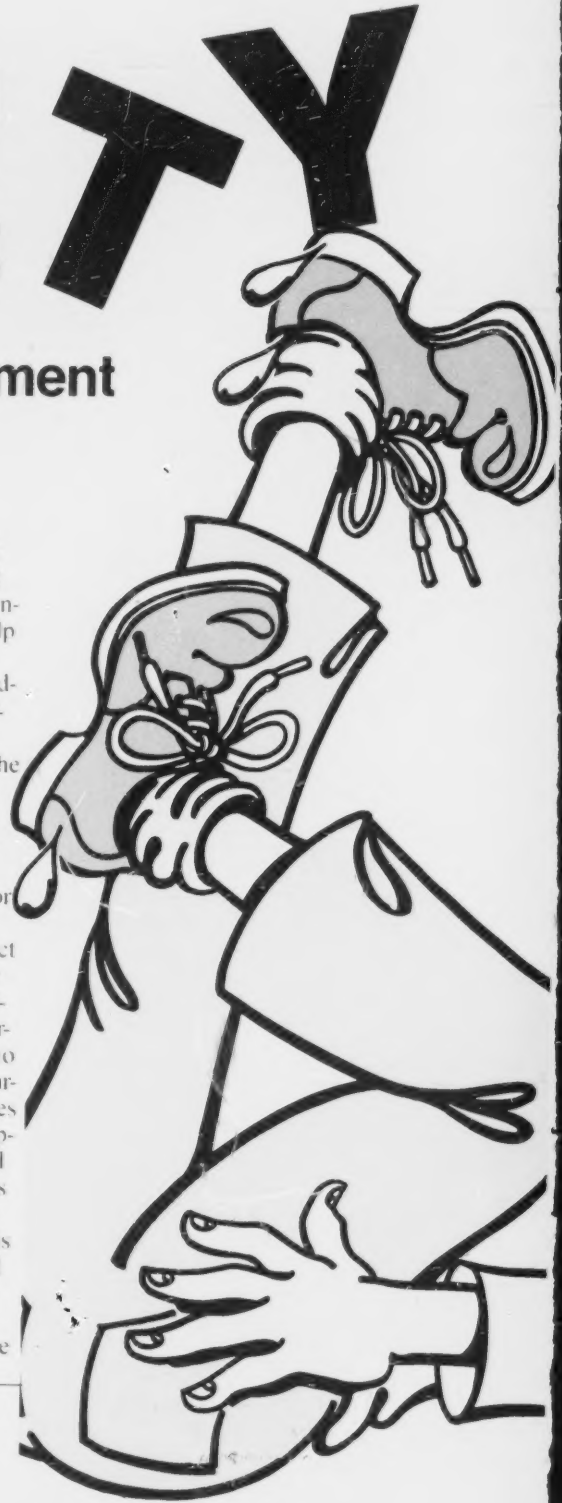
by Kathy Boyle

Restaurant employees face the same hazards as restaurant customers—slippery floors, torn carpets, the chance of a fire—but they face additional hazards in the kitchen as well. On a routine basis, restaurant employees use hand knives for cutting and chopping; they operate grinding, mixing and slicing equipment; they use high and low pressure steam in pressure cookers, urns, steam tables; they cook with microwave ovens, hot stoves, conventional ovens, broilers, grills and griddles, open gas flame and red hot electrical heating elements; and they use hot water, hot cooking fats and other potentially dangerous liquids.

NRA study group combats slips and falls . . .

Although the kitchen hazards of cuts, burns and other minor mishaps in the preparation of food are by far the most common injuries to foodservice employees, it is a "slip or fall" accident that is the most costly employee injury. Minor cuts and burns may only require a Band Aid. Back injury, on the other hand, can result in lengthy time off work and compensation over a period of years. To help alleviate the tremendous financial drain slips and falls have on the foodservice industry, NRA's Safety Officers Study Group named slips and falls as its "number one priority." The group, which meets twice a year, is focusing its efforts on three main products: 1) the shoes worn by restaurant employees, 2) the cleaning agents used on floors and 3) the floor material itself.

Of the three areas, the shoe project is the one nearing completion. Over two years ago, the NRA Safety Officers Group went to shoe manufacturers with the hope of inspiring them to develop a non-slip shoe. Herman Survivors, a division of Stride Rite Shoes which also manufactures Sperry Topsiders, embraced the idea. It worked with Goodyear Tire design engineers to design a unique tread that would inhibit slips on wet floors. The sole is made of a soft, durable trademarked compound. When it hits water, the shoe channels the liquid to the side through the shoe's tread. A full range



A new shoe has been designed to inhibit slips on wet floors. It is expected to be on the market by August 1985.

Rotating jobs is another good way to create awareness of safety hazards.

of sizes of these shoes is expected on the market by August 1985.

With regard to floor cleaning agents, the NRA Safety Officers Group approached the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF), asking the group to develop a standard for measuring a floor cleaning detergent's ability to remove soils from the floor. The NSF has agreed to do the research, and the standard should be completed within a year or two. With the standard to measure from, restaurateurs can determine if they are cleaning the floor properly or if the detergent is ineffective.

The third phase of the NRA Safety Officers Study Group's research—the floor materials themselves—is still in the planning phase.

Eliminating safety hazards . . .

In general, safety experts agree that the first line of defense in safety is to get rid of hazards as soon as they are spotted. Here is one example of how this might be done. When Red Lobster (Orlando, FL) introduced its new seafood pasta last year, it also added a microwave for warming. Because of space requirements Red Lobster mounted the microwaves four or five feet off the ground so employees had to reach up to put food in or take it out. But most employees couldn't manage this reaching without hot spills running down their arms so steps were added. "We learned don't put the microwaves up high," says Dee Clingman, vice president of quality control for Red Lobster.

At one fast service operation, there were several serious burn claims resulting from changing the oil in the fat fryer, recalls Lyle Pleak, manager of service management for the Liberty Mutual Insurance Company. "We worked with the company to find a better way to change the oil. By changing the procedure, we minimized the chance of serious burns," says Pleak. "It is better to engineer the hazard away or change the procedures first."

Kitchen doors which swing both ways are another typical restaurant hazard. Accidents typically occur when two employees rush at the door from both sides at the same time. A simple engineering solution is to cut a window in the door so servers can see if someone is approaching or, alternatively, screen the kitchen area from customer view with a wall. The latter would eliminate swinging doors altogether.

Another way to remove hazards is to test new menu items extensively before they are introduced. "When we decided to develop mesquite cooking," recalls Clingman of Red Lobster, "we evaluated hazards—even studying what pesticides are used to debug mesquite wood in Mexico and the U.S. By the time we rolled out the concept, there were no health or safety hazards. We chose mesquite charcoal, which takes up less storage space. In addition, it is easier to capture the ash, which reduces any breathing hazard for employees. There is a tremendous advantage in including the technical

Beginning a safety inspection—questions to ask

1. Exterior surroundings

- Are walks, steps, ramps and other passageways in good repair and free from holes or obstructions?
- Are parking lots well marked to indicate entrances, exits and traffic patterns?
- Is the area free from carts, boxes, cans and debris which could constitute a hazard?
- Are exterior platforms, steps and parking areas well-lit at night during operational hours?
- Are trash and other combustibles kept away from the building?
- Are ice and snow sanded or removed promptly from exterior landings, steps, walks, passageways and parking areas?
- Are parking lots free of holes that could cause tripping and injury?
- Are hanging signs, awnings and other exterior accessories safely secured?
- Are bottled gas cylinders properly supported and protected from physical damage?

2. Dining area

- Are service doors adequately marked to insure safe traffic patterns?
- Are tray stands and service carts in good repair and not obstructing traffic?
- Are waiters, waitresses or busboys refraining from overloading trays or bus boxes?
- Is floor free from food spillage, silverware, broken glassware, loose mats, torn carpets or other hazards?
- Are broken or wobbly chairs or unsteady tables quickly repaired?
- Are chairs free from splinters or metal or wood burrs?
- Is chipped or cracked glassware or dishware thrown away?
- Are customers guarded from hot food holding equipment?

3. Fire protection equipment

- Are all fire extinguishers properly mounted, easy to see and easy to get to?
- Are all fire extinguishers identified for use (class of fire)?
- Are all fire extinguishers tagged, noting monthly inspection and annual maintenance?
- Are extinguishers of proper size and type for protection from hazard?
- Have the automatic sprinkler systems, standpipe and hose installations been inspected within the past year? Are they in operable condition?
- If cooking equipment has been added or relocated, have appropriate changes been made in the fire extinguishing system?
- Are portable fire extinguishers adjacent to the cooking equipment of the "20 BC" rating?
- Has the automatic fire protection system over cooking appliances been inspected and serviced by qualified persons in the last six months?

—NRA Safety Manual

people in the development of new products. I can't put a dollar sign on how much money we saved, but we certainly saved money."

Employees, too, can help with safety problems. At Red Lobster, one staff member developed the idea of an oyster mitt, which has minimized employee cuts from opening oysters. The mitt, which looks like a catcher's mitt, is made out of truck tire inner tube material. "What we did was buy truck tire inner tubes and donated them to a handicapped work center. The handicapped now cut out the patterns for the mitts and assemble them for us. It really has cut down on injuries," explains Clingman.

Safety is a management function . . .

Other safety hazards cannot be effectively eliminated. In these cases, training is required to protect employees. Training can take many forms: individual instruction, group orientation, on-the-job reminders, audiovisual aids or employee newsletters with safety hints. The McDonald's Corporation (Oak Brook, IL) publishes "Safety Alert Bulletins" once-a-month. These highlight a different safety topic each time, such as slippery floors, dangerous chemicals employees may handle or shoe safety. Several insurance companies, including CIGNA Loss Control Services, Inc. and the Liberty Mutual Insurance Company, have developed video tapes on fire safety and other measures. These can be borrowed for a small fee.

"It takes continuous awareness to foster safety," says Terry Higgins, director of risk management for SAGA Corporation (Menlo Park, CA). "We have incentives and corporate awards to stimulate safety awareness. Our 'safety bingo' is a game between units, where the winner is the unit that goes the longest without an injury. The prizes are not necessarily that big—a free lunch or a half-hour off work—but they are motivating."

Jim Marshall, insurance and safety manager for McDonald's agrees that safety is a management function. "Preventing accidents may require redesigning work habits, equipment and training procedures or just feeding accident information out to people. It's getting back to basics. Are the maintenance procedures being done on schedule? For example, although it's hard to clean floors in the kitchen or in employee working areas during a busy time out front, good safety procedures dictate a soiled kitchen floor must be cleaned on a strict schedule.

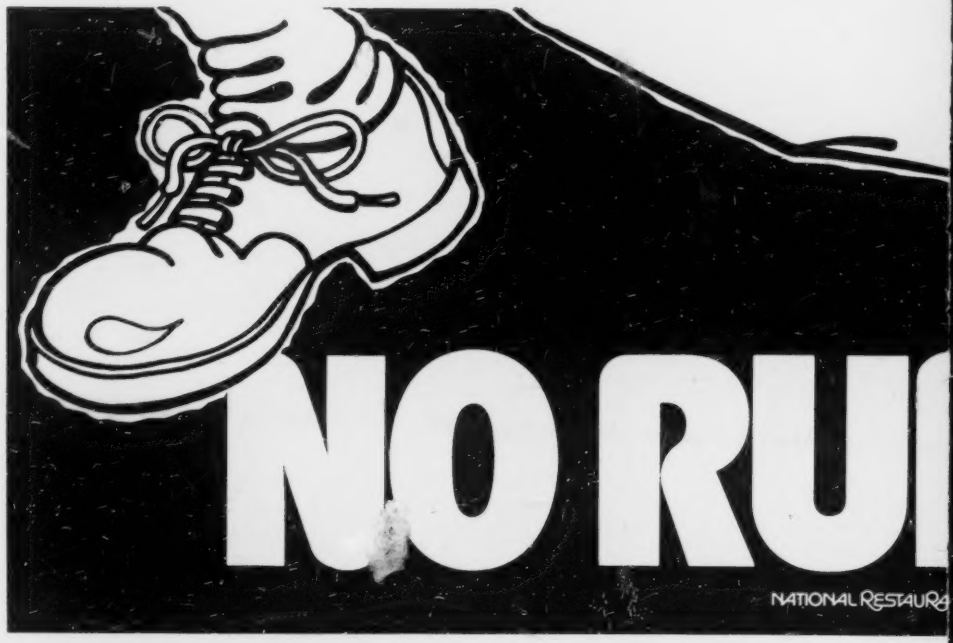
Rotating jobs is another good way to create awareness of safety hazards. Since employees get bored performing repetitive tasks, they can become complacent and can injure themselves by not paying attention. New tasks demand attention.

> "There is a tremendous advantage in including technical people in the development of new products."

Keeping a record of accidents . . .

Keeping a record of accidents can provide very useful information for corrective action. Be sure to note the time of day, day of week and date. When Red Lobster collected this information, it found, not surprisingly, that most accidents occurred during the summer months on Friday and Saturday evenings, during the busy times between 4 to 8 p.m. when the most people are in the restaurant and things are happening faster.

Thus it makes good sense to sched-



ule routine tasks ahead of the busiest times to offset the extra confusion. Also, by having enough staff on hand, employees are less likely to take dangerous safety shortcuts because they are rushed. Randy Walker, director of safety and security for S & A Restaurant Corporation (Dallas, TX) agrees, "Without adequate staffing, employees are rushed and not thinking about safety; they cut corners and eventually someone will get hurt."

Safety self-inspection programs are crucial . . .

But staffing is not enough. A self-inspection program is essential to routinely evaluate the effectiveness of safety efforts and to indicate the weak points that require action.

Inspection sheets should be developed for each specific operation or procedure within the restaurant. A single, all-inclusive self-inspection form is self-defeating as it will seldom be used.

There is no guaranteed best way to develop checklists. One idea is to divide the operation by areas—receiving, garbage storage area, meat cutting area, baking area, dining room, food holding area and bathrooms—and then develop safety checklists for each area. This way a responsible employee can check a specific area as needed. Other checklists can be developed for specific equipment, such as ladders and first aid equipment. (See sample questions in inspection sidebar.)

The frequency of inspection is a matter of common sense. In winter, when sidewalks are icy, the restaurant exterior may have to be checked several times a day. On the other hand, a monthly inspection of portable fire extinguishers will probably be adequate. Employee safety committees are often the best source for developing checklists and carrying out routine inspections.

> **"Without adequate staffing, employees are pushed and not thinking about safety. They cut corners and eventually someone will get hurt."**

No inspection program would be complete without follow-up procedures and corrective actions. As soon as possible, discuss hazards during training sessions or post alerts on bulletin boards or print in the company newsletters.

Looking ahead for better solutions in the future . . .

There are a number of operators who believe the foodservice industry needs to take a longer perspective on safety. "We need to think beyond the traditional methods we now use. For example, we need to think of different ways to clean floors besides the mop and bucket," encourages Terry Higgins of SAGA Corporation. "The wet-vac is just one possibility. The vacuum picks up a high percentage of the water spread on the floor, leaving a less dangerous wet floor. Even though the wet-vac is widely available, it is not widely used in the foodservice industry."

Higgins also suggests that restaurateurs take a long, hard look at kitchen design with regard to safety. "After slips and falls, strains are our next most serious injury," he says. "Our people handle and lift heavy material and end up with strains. What we should do is look at the restaurant kitchen with this type of injury in mind," suggests Higgins. "Some equipment has evolved correctly, some has improved. But with just a few, small changes we could make major safety improvements. I would say that the next frontier in restaurant employee safety is in kitchen design."

The size and weight of deliveries should be studied as well. Often these can be changed. When Red Lobster found that some items were being delivered in 70 to 80 lb. boxes, the company worked with suppliers to limit the size of packages to 50 lbs. maximum.

Conclusion . . .

The best safety programs try to eliminate hazards as they are spotted. Or, if they can't be eliminated, restaurant procedures are changed to compensate for the danger.

Safety-conscious employees are one of the greatest assets to a well-run safety program. Employees not only can spot hazards long before a routine inspection is necessary, but they also can inventively solve safety problems. ❑

Editor's note: *The National Restaurant Association has produced nearly two dozen different safety materials—from manuals to stickers, such as the ones used to illustrate this story. For more information about these materials, consult NRA's* Catalog of Publications *or call the NRA office in Washington, DC, at (202)638-6100 or (800)424-5156.*

RECIPE FORMATS

From hand-me-downs to computerized systems

by Toni Lydecker

The pork chops with home-canned peppers are made just as they were in 1938, when Anthony Panza's great-grandmother presided in the kitchen of Panza's Restaurant in Saratoga Springs, NY. But the recipe has never been written down. "There's been no need. My 87-year-old grandmother is still cooking that dish, and another family member will take over when she retires," explains Panza. Several dishes created more recently, such as Fettucine alla Panza and the restaurant's version of homemade Italian sausage, are also known only to the family—largely because of a desire to maintain secrecy.

The Panzas are following a great oral tradition that still reigns in Europe, where it is rare to see either a family cook or a restaurant chef poring over a recipe. Instead, knowledge of culinary techniques and traditional dishes is stored mostly in their heads.

But the Panza family operates an American restaurant in the 20th century, managing a staff of 40 employees whose training in the culinary arts is fairly limited. Unlike the pork chop dish, many of the restaurant's offerings are not signature items. For these reasons, the family has devised a system of recipe management that promotes consistent, efficient preparation of food. Recipes for a majority of menu offerings have been written down with the aid of a custom-designed software package, and copies are computer-produced as necessary for staff use.

This article profiles the successful use of recipes by three restaurants: Pawleys Island Inn, Pawleys Island, SC; Printer's Row, Chicago, IL; and the American Cafe, Washington, DC. Although their recipe management systems differ greatly, these operations share a common determination to maintain high standards of quality in the food they prepare.

Use of recipes in restaurants does not follow any ironclad rules. Indeed, radically different methods may be used within the same restaurant. Because recipes are part of an operation's total management matrix, the most useful system depends on the type of food served, the size of the menu and its changeability, the management structure, and the skills of employees working in food preparation.

Some restaurants record recipes on file cards, while others keep them on 8½" × 11" sheets of paper. Both are ordinarily covered in plastic to protect against grease, food and repeated use. Copies may be distributed to appropriate work stations each day or hung permanently on hooks for easy access. Duplicates of recipes are often stored in the company safe. As one restaurant owner pointed out, "Our recipes are a valuable commodity. If we lost them through fire or some other disaster, we'd have to start over."

"Our recipes are a valuable commodity. If we lost them through fire or some other disaster, we'd have to start over."

Abbreviated recipes encourage concentration . . .

Louis Osteen, owner of Pawleys Island Inn (Pawleys Island, SC), conceives of recipes as living creations: "They evolve a little at a time. I'm continually adjusting a recipe to reflect what I've learned." The 200-seat restaurant, with its constantly changing menu, is known for such unusual dishes as "angel hair pasta with Waccamaw River sturgeon caviar" and "duck breast grilled with honey and thyme flowers."

Some recipes have been written out, usually when a customer asks for a copy, but most exist only in outline form, such as this one for a wine sauce base: "1 cup shallots, 4 cups white wine; reduce by ½. Add 1 cup veal stock, reduce again. Add 2 quarts cream. Cook until thick. Strain."

Such shorthand recipes make sense when a well-trained cook is on hand to decipher and make adjustments, but Osteen's use of abbreviated recipes is also a management technique. He believes that detailed "standard recipes" can breed mediocrity, by encouraging kitchen staff to cook without thinking. "Cooking is a sequence of decisions that must be made correctly for the dish to turn out. Without highly specific instructions, the cook must taste carefully and think hard about what to do next. Because of that mental concentration, the dish is more likely to turn out well," maintains Osteen.

A recipe calling for 50 pounds of onions or 10 quarts of veal stock might seem foolproof, but following it mindlessly can be dangerous, he insists. If the onions are unusually sharp, that quantity could be excessive; similarly, extra meat on the bones could produce a stock of greater strength than usual. A cook who is aware of natural variations in ingredients will make appropriate adjustments in the recipe.

Osteen works closely with the kitchen staff, checking dishes in the final stages of preparation to make sure taste and appearance meet the restaurant's standards. When someone new joins the staff, his involvement may be even greater until recipes are prepared consistently well. Certain techniques cannot be taught through a recipe, believes Osteen, citing the delicate sense of timing required to grill a piece of fish properly. He also has strong preconceptions about presentation, and will spend several minutes showing a cook exactly how to lay the sauce across an entree of sauteed veal with crawfish.

Even with this strong supervisory control, small variations in the restaurant's dishes are inevitable. "But," shrugs Osteen, "you can either have consistent food or good food. What we strive for is consistently good food."

Computerized recipes provide framework . . .

At Printer's Row (Chicago, IL), owner Michael Foley's approach is much more detailed. The menu, which has won national acclaim for its marriage of classical European cooking techniques with fresh American ingredients, changes daily.

To organize the staff, each day's menu is entered on a microcomputer. Whenever possible, each description follows this order: product, method, garnish. For relatively simple recipes, Foley notes the proportions beside each ingredient. For "medallions of salmon baked with red wine sauce and American salmon caviar," he would write "2 oz." beside salmon, "2 oz." beside red wine sauce and "1 oz." beside caviar. The cook responsible for preparing the dish can refer, if necessary, to the restaurant's basic recipe for red wine sauce.

A more complex recipe receives a full written description, again following the "product, method, garnish" format. Stored permanently in the computer, both the menus and detailed recipes are periodically indexed according to season and dominant ingredient. For example, persimmons are categorized under autumn recipes; and when that fruit is selected, recipes for persimmon pudding, persimmon ice cream, persimmon sorbet, and duck with a warm persimmon sauce will appear on the screen.

Whether he has annotated the menu or written out full instructions, Foley does not simply hand the material over to the sous-chef or a cook. Instead, he uses it as the framework for a discussion about correct preparation procedures. The cook develops individual specialties, such as sauces or seafood. Each maintains a book of all recipes prepared while at Printer's Row and is encouraged to take this collection along when moving to a new position. "It's an excellent way for a budding chef to build a repertoire," commments Foley.

Recipes help, but fine tuning is generally necessary each time a dish is prepared. Recognizing that a good cook must know when a little more salt or lemon juice would round out the flavor, Foley encourages staff to "taste and taste and taste." He adds, "Too often, we're in such a hurry to create that the food doesn't taste as good as it sounds and looks." A com-

mon problem with a new recipe is that the chef does not know how it should taste. In this situation, it is important to work closely with the employee the first few times the dish is prepared.

Following a highly organized system of recipe management pays off in three ways, says Foley: "It allows the executive chef or owner to approach a cook in the same way each time—you're giving verbal instructions, but with a hard copy to fall back on. Second, having all the recipes on file is invaluable for training new staff. Third, it makes writing a cookbook much easier."

Two-tiered recipes assure quality on a large scale . . .

Everyone knows of a restaurant that went downhill after growing too large for the owner or executive chef to personally supervise the preparation of food. The American Cafe (Washington, DC), known for its use of fresh ingredients in innovative recipes, is a counterexample: a company that has kept its grip on quality while diversifying and expanding.

"Without highly specific instructions, the cook must taste carefully and think hard about what to do next. Because of that mental concentration, the dish is more likely to turn out well."

Running a central kitchen has helped the American Cafe maintain its reputation for consistently high-grade menu offerings. A complex recipe management system has also contributed to this effort.

The company's central kitchen supplies a wide variety of prepared foods to 12 units, including restaurants, market cafes and a catering operation. Many of the company's best-known dishes are prepared here: soups, stews, roasted and smoked meats, composed salads and baked goods. Central kitchen staff develop expertise in preparing these dishes properly. The culinary skills of most staff in the units, on the other hand, rarely extend beyond the ability to reheat soup or slice meat. Instead, their forte is food presentation.

A two-tiered recipe system reflects the differing responsibilities of central kitchen and unit employees. When the executive chef of the central kitchen completes a new master recipe, it goes on file. Because the quantity needs of the units vary greatly, a basic one-pound recipe is adjusted for several different batch sizes, depending on how much is needed that day.

"Uniformity in preparation and presentation is essential in a large operation such as ours. We can't toler-

How to develop winning recipes

1. Think of an idea. For inspiration, thumb through cookbooks, cooking magazines, your own notes. Or use an interesting product—zucchini flowers, say, or a locally made cheese—as a starting point. Don't try to be original for originality's sake; raspberries with dill sauce may be a new idea, but that doesn't mean customers will like it. The best new recipes often give a different twist to a classic preparation.

2. Test the recipe. Write down all ingredients and instructions, using either blank notebook paper or a form with columns for several tests. Follow this draft exactly, using standard measuring devices even when you would ordinarily improvise. Revise the recipe according to notes made during the testing and the reactions of your tasting panel. Then test the recipe again—and again—until it is perfect.

3. Measure the ingredients. Volume is normally used for liquid ingredients; weight is more accurate for dry ingredients, especially when the recipe is for 25 portions or more. For the sake of efficiency, use the easiest unit of measure—¼ cup milk, not 4 tablespoons milk. Consider including metric equivalents alongside standard units if some staff members are accustomed to using them.

4. Describe the ingredients. List ingredients in the order in which they will appear in the instructions. Describe each ingredient precisely (Spanish onion, ground oregano, unbleached white flour). Also, describe its specific form or state; for example, one pound cream cheese, softened, cut into small chunks.

5. Describe the method. Gear the style and length of recipe instructions to staff needs; remember that a new employee may benefit from extra detail. Terminology should be precise, as in these terms for cutting ingredients: "mince," "finely chop," "coarsely chop," "cut into pieces of x proportions." List a range of cooking times ("20–25 minutes") or a time and a completion phrase ("25 minutes or until bubbling"). Always list time before temperature ("Bake 12–15 minutes at 400° F."). Describe the size and nature of all utensils and containers.

6. Include helpful details. Always list a recipe's yield at the outset. Other useful information: total preparation time, ingredient variations, freezing instructions, shelf life, nutritional content, suggested accompaniments, garnish ideas.

"I'm continually adjusting a recipe to reflect what I've learned."

"A common problem with a new recipe is that the chef does not know how it should taste."

ate variations in the execution of recipes," said Matthew Spielman, executive general manager of food services for American Cafe. To ensure that a dish will look and taste exactly the same each time, the recipes spell out every detail of execution; for example, a pasta recipe will dictate which machine setting is necessary to produce noodles of the correct dimensions.

A standard grid makes it easy to find each step of the recipe. Reading from left to right, the staff member identifies the ingredient, the amount by weight or volume and the method of preparation. Each recipe specifies a shelf life, calculated to end well before spoilage occurs. No deviations are permitted.

The recipe system's second component specifies how to complete the preparation of a menu offering and to plate it. Containing specifications for all new recipes, a book corresponding to the American Cafe's summer and winter menus goes out twice a year to each unit. The instructions for cole slaw, for example, tell unit employees how to slice up cabbage and other fresh ingredients each day before mixing in the cole slaw sauce made up in the central kitchen.

Equally important are the plating instructions, which describe how many grams of each item should be placed on a plate and the precise arrangement of all items. In the recipe for chicken tarragon sandwich, for example, the instructions not only tell how much chicken to put on the croissant but also the precise quantity and arrangement of the garnishes—down to the grams of watercress and the number of cucumber slices. A line at the bottom of the recipe may instruct the server to perform some last-minute operation, such as adding a spoonful of dressing to the salad.

When a new recipe is developed or an existing one is modified, the appropriate plating instructions are sent out immediately to the units, along with an explanatory memo. Because this information is stored in loose-leaf binders, incorporating changes is simple.

Still, manager Matthew Spielman argues against overemphasizing the recipes themselves: "After all, they're just paper. It's human beings that make recipes work. When you have a creative chef to develop the recipes and good employees to carry them out, everything falls into place." ❑

Does your new recipe measure up?

Before adding a new recipe to the menu, where it could help or hurt your image, give it close scrutiny. Ideally, at least three qualified people should taste and evaluate a recipe according to these criteria.

Appearance. Is overall appearance good? Can the color or visual appearance be improved by adjusting ingredients or preparation? Would the addition of a sauce, topping or garnish help?

Flavor. Does the intended taste come through? Do the flavors of individual ingredients blend, or does one ingredient dominate? Do herbs and spices enhance the natural ingredients or overpower them? Is the aroma appealing, unpleasant or lacking?

Texture. Do textural qualities, such as smoothness, roughness or granularity, add or detract from the dish's appeal? Would the addition or omission of ingredients improve the texture?

Nutrition. What is the nutritional composition of each portion (include calories, vitamins, fat, protein, etc.)? Does the dish have strong positive or negative qualities, nutritionally speaking? Could nutritional value be increased through adding, eliminating, substituting ingredients?

Practicality. Are ingredients readily available? Does the recipe stipulate whole units of ingredients wherever possible? Are such elements as difficulty of preparation, dishes and appliances used, and time required appropriate to the operation's resources? Based on the total cost of preparation, does the recipe fit readily into the operation's pricing structure?

Customer appeal. Will the recipe sound appealing to customers when described in the menu or by servers? Would the dish be inviting if photographed for the menu? Does it hold the potential to become one of the restaurant's signature menu offerings?

Next in Line

Moving Into The Family Business

by Anne Papa

When California restaurateur Perry Poteris was first considering getting into the business, his father, an established restaurateur of 50 years, sat him down and sternly said, "Son, better you should break both legs than get into this crazy business. But if you must, be prepared to love it."

Albert Taxin, second generation family owner of Old Original Bookbinder's Restaurant in Philadelphia, PA, recalls evenings during his childhood when his father would come home from the restaurant, exhausted and exasperated. "He'd say he was fed up," remembers Taxin. "He'd say the business was making him old before his time. And then in the same breath he'd turn to me and say, 'One day, son, this will all be yours. And you're going to love it just as much as I do.'"

Albert Taxin does love the restaurant business. So does Perry Poteris. For them and for thousands of successful restaurateurs across the country, foodservice is much more than a business—it's a family tradition. Independently-owned restaurants account for approximately one-half of all foodservice establishments in America today, and a vast majority of these are operated by two or more members of the same family.

Ask any of these operators, many of whom represent the second, third or even fourth generation of family ownership, why they're in the business, and they'll list a variety of reasons: "I was raised in this business. I wanted to make my parents proud. I wanted to be my own boss." Ask for one overriding reason, however, and the answer will inevitably be the same: "I'm in this business because it's in my blood."

More than just "the boss' kid" . . .

Being next in line to assume ownership of the family business has many obvious advantages. "In what other business situation are you automatically pegged for the top slot?" asks one heir. But this does not mean that problems don't exist. Bill Zehnder, second generation family owner of the

Bill Zehnder (top left) and family

"If your parents founded the business, you're going to have conflicts. Often the younger generation is better trained for management. Even so, you never want to lose that entrepreneurial spirit, that desire and drive instilled by the founder."

—Bill Zehnder

Frankenmuth Bavarian Inn, Frankenmuth, MI, voices the frustrations of many when he says that one of the biggest problems the successor in a family business faces is the constant need to develop a separate credibility. "You can't stay in your parents' shadow," he says. "You've got to be more than just 'the boss' kid.'"

Indeed, the development of credibility and a management style independent of one's parents is a process which begins the moment "the boss' kid" enters the family business. Particularly for those who jump immediately into a top level position, the challenge is constant. Don Roth, owner of three fine dining establish-

"If there's one thing these young people have taught me it's that my expertise is put to better use if it is selectively channeled. And the only way to do that is to delegate responsibility."

—Harold Leifer

ments in Chicago, IL, says he had a difficult time starting out because he had to learn from the top. "As the boss' son, I became an executive immediately," he recalls. "I didn't go through the various departments first—cooking, dishwashing, waiting tables—that many other managers go through. Consequently, I had to concentrate for a long time on just learning the ropes before I could even consider any changes or new directions." In contrast, Roth feels his two sons are better prepared to enter the business because they've already spent time "learning the ropes," that is, doing various jobs in the restaurant while growing up.

Like Roth, many family owners believe there are definite advantages to be gained by getting into the family business early—even starting at the bottom. Recalls Albert Taxin of Old Original Bookbinder's, "I remember telling my father I wanted to start at the top. To which he responded, 'Dig a hole. That's the only way you'll start at the top.'" So Taxin spent his early years at the restaurant assisting the chef in the back of the house, assisting the host at the front of the house and basically filling in wherever he was needed. "This put me ahead in two ways," he maintains. "First, I was learning. I was constantly learning about the business from experts. And, second, other employees could *see* I was learning. I was paying my dues, and so I gained credibility in their eyes."

Bill Zehnder of Frankenmuth's Bavarian Inn recalls with a laugh how, at the age of 10, he began "paying his dues" at the family restaurant. "Back then, the dishwashers used to throw the garbage to the hogs we kept on our farm. Well, my job was to go out there and collect any pieces of silverware that might have been thrown away. For each piece salvaged, I was paid a nickel." Zehnder says he gradually moved into more conventional positions, such as doorman, dishwasher and fry cook. He agrees with Taxin that these experiences helped him tremendously when he moved into management.

Making the decision to stay in the business . . .

Albert Taxin, Bill Zehnder and countless second or third generation family owners like them faced challenges coming into the family business that were formidable, yes, but never insurmountable. Says Taxin, "I was willing to deal with anything because, quite honestly, there was nothing else I ever wanted to do. Plain and simple: From the time I was just a kid, I knew exactly where I was going."

For some, the ambition to one day assume control of the family business encourages them to obtain formal education in restaurant management. Harry Knowles, owner of The Manor, an upscale restaurant in West Orange, NJ, has two sons who also "never considered doing anything else. They grew up in this business, and they wanted to stay in this business." Knowles says that his sons have an advantage he never had because both attended restaurant management school. "The lessons they learned in college are directly applicable to situations here," he says.

For others, the desire to one day assume ownership of the family business is not so clearcut. Many sons and daughters of family business owners question the inevitability of their futures. They wonder what it would be like to pursue careers elsewhere, away from the securities and pressures of the family business.

Bernard Guste, proprietor of Antoine's Restaurant in New Orleans, LA, represents the fifth generation of Antoine's ownership. It's been two years since he assumed proprietorship, and he says he finds his work challenging and rewarding. Much of his current job satisfaction, he believes, can be attributed to his decision at an earlier age to leave the business for a while.

"I was feeling restless," he recalls. "I can best describe it this way: I used to walk through the French Quarter, and I'd see those mules with little hats and sunglasses on, pulling little old-fashioned buggies. They'd also be wearing blinders that blocked their peripheral vision so they wouldn't get spooked. These blinders gave them tunnel vision. Well, I could identify with those mules. By never leaving the family business, I felt I wasn't seeing everything there was to see."

Guste subsequently left the business for seven years, working as a restaurant manager in other people's family businesses. When he came back, he had a renewed enthusiasm and appreciation for his position at

"I remember telling my father I wanted to start at the top. To which he responded, 'Dig a hole. That's the only way you'll start at the top.'"

—Albert Taxin

Antoine's. "My perspective had completely changed," he avows. "I'd proven something to myself. I felt more capable, more credible."

For Ralph Brennan, proprietor of Mr. B's, a fine dining establishment also in New Orleans, leaving the family business meant pursuing a career that was completely removed from restaurant management. Brennan, whose family's restaurant ownership includes Mr. B's and Commander's Palace in New Orleans, LA, and Brennan's of Houston in Houston, TX, studied accounting in college and then worked for a time as a certified public accountant with a leading firm. "Working outside of the business gave

"I'm over 40 years old. Sometimes I wonder, 'When will my father no longer have the last say?'"
—Bill Zehnder

me a feeling of independence, which I've since been able to carry back into the business," he explains. "I always knew I'd come back to the restaurant—I kept gravitating toward it—but I also knew I had other interests." Brennan adds that his accounting ability has proved invaluable in his management of Mr. B's.

Two generations coexisting in management roles . . .

Whether the "boss' kid" leaves the business and returns or comes directly out of restaurant management school, sooner or later he or she is ready to take over the reins. Occasionally, parents may take this opportunity to remove themselves from the day-to-day rigors of the business. More often than not, however, there is a period of overlap. Parents who are in control and accustomed to doing things their way share responsibility with sons and daughters who may have their own, very different, management styles. Again, it is the constant need for credibility and independence that inspires many incoming family members to assert themselves openly and up front—even if their opinions may conflict with those of their parents.

"Particularly if your parents founded the business, you're going to have conflicts," says Bill Zehnder. "Often, the younger generation is better trained for management. Even so, you never want to lose that entrepreneurial spirit, that desire and drive instilled by the founder." Zehnder says that usually his parents, who are both still active in the business, are in full agreement with the decisions he makes daily. But occasionally they'll disapprove. Often it's for good reasons that were not readily discernible. "There may be emotional ties involved that I was not aware of," he says. This interjection does not frustrate Zehnder. "After all, I can't forget that this is their dream I'm operating. So if they have qualms about my involvement in a particular area of the business, I respect that and back off."

Don Roth of Roth's Restaurants, Inc., reminisces about the sharp contrast between his and his father's management styles when he first came into the family business. "My father was constantly on the floor of the restaurant with his hands in everything," Roth recalls. "He wasn't inclined to allocate responsibility. Well, I've never operated that way. I believe managers are only essential to a business if they can be trusted to assume responsibility." Roth points out that it would be impossible for him to oversee all operations personally. "Restaurant management today goes far beyond what it was 30 years ago," he maintains. "Today it's a matter of finance, of marketing, of promotion—of *business*. The old image of the hands-on entrepreneur no longer suffices. I have to manage differently than my father did because the business is different."

Learning to delegate is the same lesson that Harold Leifer, owner of Jimmie Kramer's Peanut Bar in Reading, PA, says he has learned from his son, nephew and niece, all of whom have come into the business. "At first I resisted it," he admits. "My way of thinking was that the best way to get anything done was to do it yourself. I was spreading myself too thin. Well, if there's one thing these young people have taught me it's that my expertise is put to better use if it is selectively channeled. And the only way to do that is to delegate responsibility."

Ask any of these operators why they're in the business . . . one overriding reason will inevitably be the same: "I'm in the business because it's in my blood."

Don Roth and son Doug at the NRA Show

"Restaurant management today goes far beyond what it was 30 years ago. Today it's a matter of finance, of marketing, of promotion—of business. The old image of the hands-on entrepreneur no longer suffices. I have to manage differently than my father did because the business is different."
—Don Roth

Expanding the business to meet different needs . . .

In some cases, families satisfy the need for both generations to maintain their own management style by expanding the business. In this way, members of the younger generation enjoy the entrepreneurial feeling of starting in on the ground floor, while members of the older generation are able to profit from a new venture without having to worry about the day-to-day details.

Perry Poteris owns three restaurants in Sacramento, CA. One of the establishments is upscale, one is a family restaurant, and one is a coffee shop. All are located within a half-mile radius. When Poteris' son George graduated from college with a degree in restaurant management and came to work for his father, there was a slot waiting for him as director of operations for the three restaurants. "But he's a lot like his father," Poteris laughs. "He just isn't content to leave well enough alone." So, together, George and Perry Poteris studied their market area and determined that a fast food franchise would best supplement the three existing restaurants. Perry Poteris is assisting with some initial legwork on the project, but his son has the ultimate responsibility for follow through.

Bill Regas, owner of Regas Restaurant in Knoxville, TN, says that the opportunity for expansion is what brought his son Grady into the family business. "He didn't feel there was room for him at the restaurant we already had," Regas says. "He could see we had a fine staff of competent managers, many of whom had been with us for years. He didn't want me to create a position for him just because he was my son." So father, son and partners Frank and Gus Regas put their heads together and decided

"Working outside of the business gave me a feeling of independence, which I've since been able to carry back into the business. I always knew I'd come back to the restaurant—I kept gravitating toward it—but I also knew I had other interests." *—Ralph Brennan*

to develop a completely new concept, which Grady would help manage. Thus developed Grady's, a casual dining establishment that is quite a departure from the white tablecloth elegance of Regas Restaurant. Open just over a year in Knoxville, the success of this venture under the leadership of company president Mike Connors has prompted the opening of two new Grady's units in Charlotte, NC, and Atlanta, GA. Grady Regas manages the Charlotte unit.

Perry Poteris with son George

"My father said, 'Son, better you should break both legs than get into this crazy business. But if you must, be prepared to love it.' " *—Perry Poteris*

Officially becoming "the boss" . . .

When does the period of overlap between the two generations end? When does "the boss' kid" officially become "the boss"?

There is no cut and dried timetable regarding this final transition of authority, just as there is no set formula in any aspect of family business management. Says Bill Zehnder with a laugh, "I'm over 40 years old. Sometimes I wonder, when will my father no longer have the last say?" Although Zehnder makes most decisions and presides over staff meetings, he says his father is always in attendance "just to make sure nothing gets by he doesn't like."

Albert Taxin agrees that the moment of transition is not easy to pinpoint. "It's hard to say when you finally take over," he muses. "You don't know when or why it happens—it just happens. Suddenly the chef comes to you instead of your father for direction." Taxin's father now goes away for six months each year but comes into the restaurant daily when he's in Philadelphia. "We'll growl at each other a lot, but I really do need him," Taxin says. "More than anything, he's a great leaning post."

And Bernard Guste of Antoine's says that, even though he is the restaurant's official proprietor, he actually is more or less the "eyes and ears" for the rest of the family. "The term 'proprietor' simply means I'm on the property, representing the best interests of my father and the rest of the family," he explains. "Just because I'm here every day and they aren't doesn't make this *my* business. There are still many decisions that I pass right on to them."

In sum . . .

The transition of family business management is a never-ending process. No sooner is one generation finally in charge then the next generation comes along. But throughout each succeeding generation there remains one overriding constant. As Bill Zehnder puts it, "Management may change, procedures may change, the business may grow and develop. But it will always be our family business. It will always be in our blood."

PROMOTIONS TAKE THE SLUMP OUT OF SLOW PERIODS

By Anne Papa

Across the country, operators are creating promotions to fill their dining rooms during slow periods. Whether they are boosting early dinner hour sales, building business on lackluster Monday or Tuesday nights or increasing traffic during cold winter months, restaurateurs are keeping those slow periods from slowing down profits.

Daily off-peak hours . . .

Breakfast hours, although rapidly gaining in popularity, are still regarded by many operators as slow periods of the day. "Unless you're specifically a breakfast place, you'll rarely reach the volume you get at lunch or dinner," complains one operator. Eugene Chismer and Jay Naparlmo, owners of five Burger King franchises in eastern Virginia, say they faced—and overcame—that problem. "When Burger King began marketing breakfast items, people were still thinking of us as a place to get burgers and fries," reports Chismer. "So we increased our breakfast business by adding extra touches. Waitresses brought food to customers, an unusual service in fast food restaurants. We gave each customer a copy of the daily newspaper. We set up televisions to broadcast morning news shows. As a result, when the company started gaining solid ground in the breakfast market, we'd already established a breakfast reputation in our area."

For the Georgian House, a 24-hour service restaurant in Niagara Falls, NY, its reputation as a great place for breakfast helped build business during a less common but no less problematic slow period—midnight to 7:00 a.m. "On weekends, we do well when the area bars close for the night," explains general manager Bob Wiepert. "But on weekdays, we needed something to keep the place busy. People don't normally eat out at four in the morning. So since we're known throughout Niagara Falls for our mid-morning breakfast specials, we decided to extend them to the early morning hours as well." Between midnight and 11:00 a.m. at the Georgian House, customers feast on hearty breakfasts for as little as $1.09. Wiepert says the special keeps early morning business steady throughout the week.

Many operators find their dining rooms empty between the hours of 2:00 and 5:00 p.m. But, ironically, the kitchen is often busiest at that time. The cleanup after the lunch rush, combined with preparation for the dinner rush, keeps things pretty hectic. Still restaurateurs find ways to drum up a little business during those hours. For instance, Jerry Minnick, owner of Minnick's Top Hat in Middleton, WI, sponsored an afternoon tea in his lounge between 3:00 and 5:30 p.m. on weekdays. "The promotion was ideal because the dining room was clear for cleaning and setting up," he says. "The lounge, which requires less prep work, was filled at an hour when it would not have been otherwise." Hotels from coast to coast also have experienced success with the afternoon tea concept.

Once 5:00 p.m. comes around, most restaurateurs are ready for a full house. Didi Debruyne, owner of La Maree, an upscale restaurant in Washington, DC, says he thought he had a profitable dinner business until he took a closer look. The restaurant was always filled by 7:00 or 7:30 p.m., but it was only partially full during the two hours before. So Debruyne established an "early bird" dinner special, offering diners who came in between 5:30 and 7:00 p.m. a complete dinner package, including appetizer, entree, dessert and coffee, at a reduced price. Debruyne took advantage of his restaurant's proximity to many Washington theaters by advertising his special as a pre-theater dinner. His restaurant, he says, is now usually filled as soon as it opens.

At the Upperline Restaurant, a small bistro in New Orleans, LA, owner Jason Clevenger also has instituted an "early bird" dinner special. "If people are making an occasion out of their meal, they usually won't show up until 7:00 p.m. or later," he maintains. "So our 'early bird' special consists of entrees on our regular menu served in smaller portions at a reduced price. It is geared toward people who are in a hurry to get someplace else; they don't want to make a big production out of their meals. And," he adds, "because they have places to go, they tend to spend less time in the restaurant. By the time our regular dinner rush begins, most of our 'early bird' diners are gone."

Charles Cirelli, owner of the Brass Kettle Family Restaurant on Cape Cod, MA, says his "early bird" special helped him build business two ways. It filled the restaurant during hours which had previously been slow, and it helped the restaurant attract Cape Cod's large population of senior citizens, many of whom take advantage of such a promotion. "Once they got to know the restaurant, they began boosting business during other periods of the day, such as breakfast and lunch," he says.

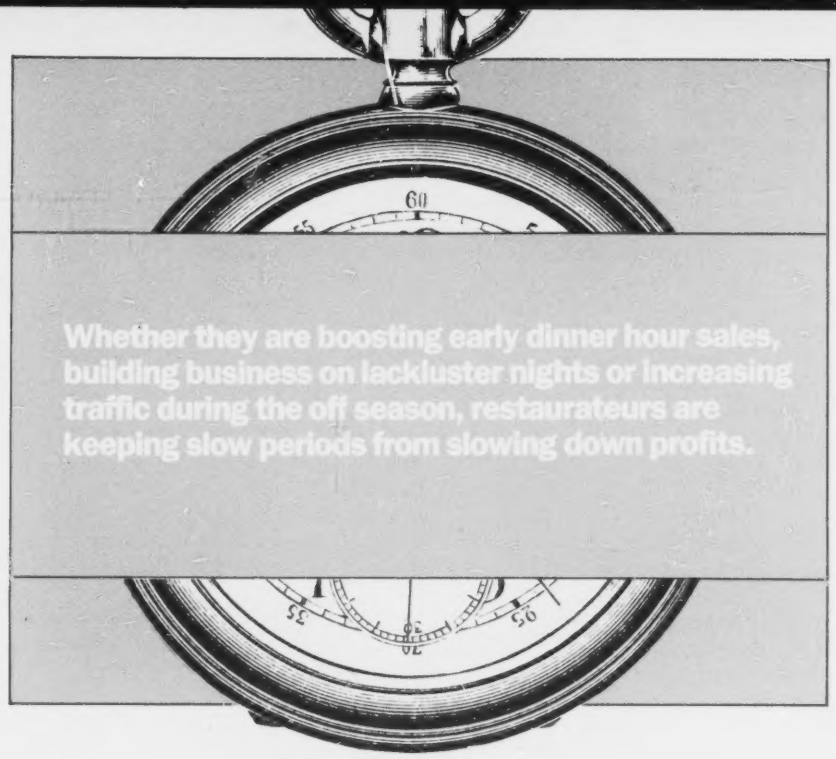
Late night specials are another way operators are either extending their dinner hours or building lounge or bar business. Robert Clifford, owner of the Gourmet House in Bismarck, ND, began offering $1.00 burgers in his lounge after 10:00 p.m. each evening as a promotion to celebrate the restaurant's 25th anniversary. The success of the promotion in attracting new business during previously slow hours was so overwhelming that Clifford says he's decided to extend the discount indefinitely.

Building business during weekly lulls . . .

Many dining rooms and lounges that enjoy a good business on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights are left empty at the beginning of the week. "On an average day, we've always used time productively and maintained business as much as possible," reports Wayne Clark, assistant manager of H.D. Hotspur's in Kent, WA. "However, we did observe a problem with certain nights of the week, Sundays in particular, that were consistently off."

Clark says H.D. Hotspur's rose from the Sunday night doldrums by instituting a weekly lip sync contest. The restaurant began the contest more than two years ago, bringing in performers and giving customers a chance to get into the act. "We've been consistently packed ever since," notes Clark. "Sundays are now one of our busiest nights."

This idea of using contests and specials is being used in establishments across the country with similar success. Callaghan's, a restaurant in Towson, MD, offers discounted shrimp specials on Tuesday nights and big screen cable TV viewing on Sundays and Mondays. Periodic Tuesday nights at Shenanigan's (Hazelton, PA) are called "Taco Tuesdays," and tacos are sold for under a dollar each. At the Georgian House on Monday evenings, patrons can order a discounted liver platter special. Even though many people would put liver on their



Whether they are boosting early dinner hour sales, building business on lackluster nights or increasing traffic during the off season, restaurateurs are keeping slow periods from slowing down profits.

"don't like list," this special makes sense for the Georgian House. Explains general manager Bob Wiepert, "We have a lot of senior citizens in this area, and a lot of them like liver. The special has really helped our Monday night business."

According to Dante Alexander, food and beverage director at the Mount Laurel Hilton Hotel (Mount Laurel, NJ) the hotel's upscale restaurant faces a problem that is just the opposite of many foodservice establishments. "We're always busy on weekdays," Alexander says. "But on the weekends the business travellers who stay at the hotel go home. Saturdays and Sundays are our slowest days."

So Alexander combatted the problem two ways: First, he joined an area diner's club, which offers club members who purchase one entree at regular price a lesser-priced entree free of charge. "This greatly increased our patronage among the local community," he maintains.

Second, he boosted weekend afternoon business by promoting the hotel as an ideal place to hold wedding or baby showers. "We determined that women would be most likely to respond to a promotion held on Saturday or Sunday afternoons," he explains. "And who can resist brides and babies?" So the chefs at the Mount Laurel Hilton created a special shower menu, which was featured in a brochure and mailed to potential customers. Alexander reports that the promotion has taken the bite out of the weekend lulls; now space for showers is sometimes booked weeks in advance.

Turning on the off season . . .

Although seasonal slumps seem to present a greater challenge, business-building promotions can make a difference during those times as well.

One way is by striving all year long to gain the loyalty of the local community. Charles Cifelli of the Brass Kettle Family Restaurant believes that his business could not survive Cape Cod winters were it not for the loyal patronage of year-round residents. He says he's gained that loyalty by establishing an exclusive club for year-rounders. "Club members receive cards which entitle them to priority service—preferred seating and special discounts—all year long," he explains. "These cards can only be purchased during the off-season—between October and April. The cards say to my customers, 'You didn't forget about me in November or December so I won't forget about you in July and August just because I have a line going out the door.' " Cifelli also hosts special party promotions during the winter. In early March, for instance, he sponsored a series of international nights, introducing New Englanders to exotic French, Italian, Western and Cajun cuisines.

At three of Eugene Chismer and Jay Naparlmo's Virginia Burger Kings, the partners have introduced an off-season promotion that is something of a novelty among fast food establishments. On weeknights throughout the winter, the Burger Kings in Williamsburg, Chesapeake and Hampton, VA, feature live entertainment. Ballad singers at each location set up their guitars in the middle of the dining room and play for a few hours each evening. Says Chismer, "The promotion has generated a lot of publicity. In some cases, the musicians, most of whom are just getting started, have developed a following as a result of their appearances at Burger King. We had one duo that packed the place for two weeks." Like Cifelli, Chismer developed the promotion as a way to "thank the local trade for their year-round loyalty." In past winters, the partners have offered candlelight dining to their customers, complete with white tablecloths, complimentary cake and congenial tableside service.

Alex von Bidder, general manager of New York City's posh Four Seasons restaurant, builds off-season business by tying a promotion to one of the restaurant's busiest seasons—Christmas. "We send out personalized Christmas cards to a select mailing list," explains von Bidder. "On the front of the card is a picture of a bottle of champagne. Inside, we tell them that we've put on ice a special bottle of our champagne for their enjoyment during January or February. Our customers are delighted with the special attention."

Finally, not all restaurants experience seasonal slumps during the winter months. Jason Clevenger of the Upperline Restaurant says summer is the slow season in New Orleans. "Fortunately, the city sponsors a lot of street festivals in the summertime," he says. "We make a point of participating in order to gain exposure among locals. We also step up our advertising in local dailies."

In sum . . .

Occasional slow periods are inevitable in the restaurant business. In fact, many operators would argue they are necessary. However, most would also agree that a fine line is drawn between necessary "breathing space" and problematic slumps—a line that a few carefully targeted promotions keep in the operator's control. ❑

Fisher's Law #64

What a way to go!

I am a frequent air traveler and have been for many years. When you become familiar with something, you get to know the procedures and the systems, and you can sense what's occurring. I fell asleep on a recent flight, had a dream, and thought you might enjoy hearing about it.

It all started when the stewardess began to address the passengers just prior to takeoff. "Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I'd like to welcome you aboard Southeast Occident Airlines Flight 13. My name is Fifi la Rue, and I am your chief stewardess. Assisting me in the cabin are Stu Street and Sue Strasse. Our aircraft is under the control of Captain Marvel, our co-pilot is Pontius, and our navigator is Corrigan.

"I'd like to take a few minutes to describe our flight procedures to you. In order to fasten your seat belt, take the flat metal piece and insert it into the buckle after lifting, and then release the faceplate. If this doesn't work, take the left hand strap and cross over and under the right hand strap and pull the two ends tight. If the straps are long enough and you are thin enough, you may want to continue fastening your seat belt by forming a bow knot with your straps.

"You will notice that there is a bag located in the seat back pocket immediately in front of you. This is a doggie bag for you to take home the unfinished portion of the sumptuous box lunch we will be serving you just prior to landing.

"Our movie today is 'Lost In Space,' and we have a selected short subject as well, entitled 'The Parachute Packer's Picnic'. There is no charge for the movie, although there is a slight $3.00 charge for the earphones. We will be coming through the cabin shortly with our beverage service, so if you wish to use the wash room you should do so now, or you may be standing in the aisles for quite some time waiting to get back to your seat. We will be selling soft drinks for $2.50 each, coffee and tea for $2.00 and beer and wine for $1.50. Hard drinks are complimentary."

A few minutes later the captain came on the squawk box. "Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Captain Marvel there, or er . . . here. I'd like to thank you for flying with ah . . . with ah . . . our airline today. I'd also like to apologize for the delay we've experienced. It's really the result of a combination of factors, the ah . . . government, the ah . . . control tower, the ah . . . ground crew, the ah . . . the weather, and ah . . . my alarm clock. We are now headed for ah . . . for ah . . . for our destination. Our new estimated time of arrival is next Thursday, but if we keep this tail wind and don't experience much traffic, we might be able to make up a little time and possibly arrive a few days early. I'll be pointing out a few ground landmarks as we proceed with the flight, and for those of you who may be sleeping when that occurs, just pay no attention. I would recommend that you keep your seat belts fastened while in your seats, for when we are at an altitude of ah . . . of ah . . . of significance, it is possible we could run into ah . . . run into ah . . . some clear air turbulence. The temperature at ah . . . at our destination, is ah . . . seasonal, and the visibility is ah . . . is ah . . . is foreseeable. Your co-pilot, Pontius, and I will be back in the cabin at the same time to visit with you a little later. But for now, just sit back, relax and enjoy this ah . . . this ah . . . this flight."

Just prior to landing, Fifi made the following announcements. "Ladies and gentlemen, we are beginning our preparation for landing at this time. Please take all your belongings from the seat floor in front of you and place them in the overhead compartment. Please be sure that your seatbelt is in the raised, forward and locked position and that your seat tray is fastened securely around you. We'd like to thank you for flying Southeast Occident Airlines today. We hope that when your plans call for air travel once again, you will consider flying some other airline, any other airline. Have a pleasant day in this . . . this . . . this fine city, or wherever your final destination may be.

"We wish to remind you that the aircraft will not stop until we reach our gate, but we fully realize that many of you are in a hurry. So if you want to rush forward and stand by the door while we are taxiing, that's fine. Just be careful not to spill your beverages on other passengers. This is the termination of . . . of . . . of . . . this flight, and for those of you who thought we were continuing on to . . . to . . . to the next place, please see the ground attendant for rebooking. Our ground attendant can be found in subbasement level 3-B next to the lost and found office."

When taxiing to the terminal, Captain Marvel came on again. "Ah . . . ah . . . ladies and gentlemen, we've arrived a few days early and, on occasion, when this happens, ah . . . ah . . . there is not a gate open for us. That being the case, we ah . . . we ah . . . we are going to the penalty box until we get clearance for a gate. I estimate that we may recieve clearance for ah . . . for ah . . . Thursday. Have a pleasant ah . . . ah . . . day."

FISHER'S LAW #64:
"Whoever said getting there is half the fun was only half right. As with many things in life, getting there is a challenge."

Small Business

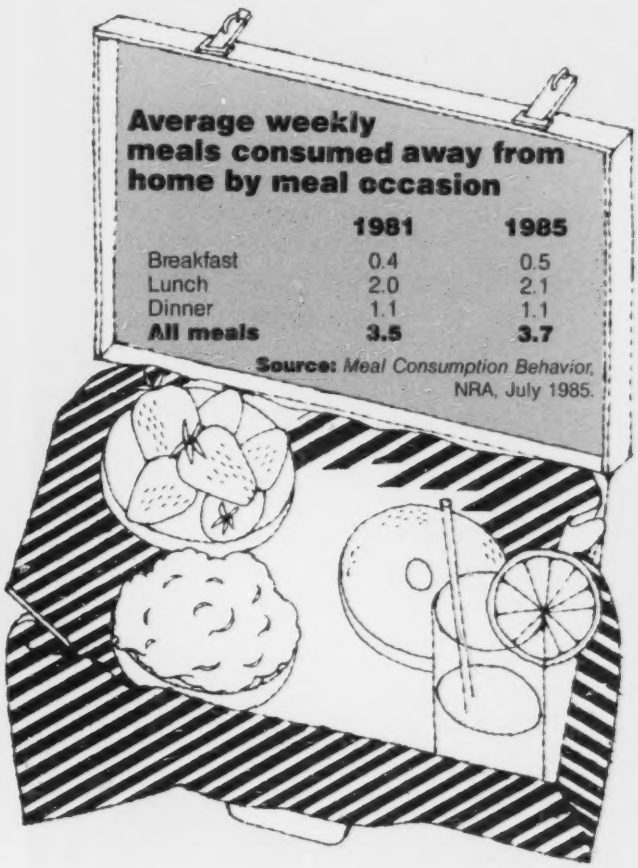
The IRS conducts workshops to help small business owners understand their tax rights and responsibilities. Contact the IRS for information.

A PUBLIC SERVICE MESSAGE FROM THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE

NRA survey report

Consumers eat out more in 1985

The National Family Opinion, Inc. queried a sample of its household panel members about where their meals were prepared in the seven days prior to the survey—prepared at home, prepared commercially at a restaurant or cafeteria or skipped.


Average weekly meals consumed away from home by meal occasion
1981 1985
Breakfast 0.4 0.5
Lunch 2.0 2.1
Dinner 1.1 1.1
All meals 3.5 3.7
Source: Meal Consumption Behavior, NRA, July 1985.

The typical person, eight years old or older, consumes 3.7 meals per week away from home, up from 3.5 meals in 1981, according to a recent consumer survey commissioned by NRA.*

The actual number of breakfasts, lunches and dinners purchased each week from restaurants in 1985 equals 770 million, an 8.2 percent jump from 1981. This represents a real gain of 4.5 percent after adjusting for the 3.7 percent increase in the number of Americans age eight or older.

Lunch is the most likely meal to be eaten away from home, while breakfast is the least likely. Respondents reported eating commercially prepared food for lunch 2.1 times during the survey week versus 1.1 times for dinner and 0.5 times for breakfast. In comparison, consumers ate five breakfasts, four lunches and five dinners either at home or at a friend's home.

Consumers are purchasing meals away from home more frequently now than in 1981. More than half (54 percent) the respondents stated they had eaten commercially prepared food for lunch at least once in the week prior to the survey versus 51 percent in 1981. Forty-nine percent reported they had eaten dinner in a restaurant at least once during the seven- day survey period, up slightly from 47 percent in 1981, and 18 percent said they had eaten breakfast away from home at least once during the survey period, compared with 15 percent in 1981.

However, the proportion of all weekly meals prepared at home, prepared commercially or skipped remained constant between

* In March 1985, the National Restaurant Association commissioned National Family Opinion, Inc. to survey individuals about where their meals are prepared and which meals, if any, they skip during a seven day period. On March 1, 1985, survey cards were mailed to a participating survey panel consisting of 10,000 households. By April 4, 1985, the official closing date, 6,788 households representing 14,255 individuals eight years old and older had returned the survey cards. Household members were asked to record for the past seven days, for the five oldest household members (age 8 or over and living at home), the number of meals prepared privately at home (or a friend's home), prepared commercially (in a restaurant or school/work cafeteria) or skipped.

1985 meal period highlights

Breakfast

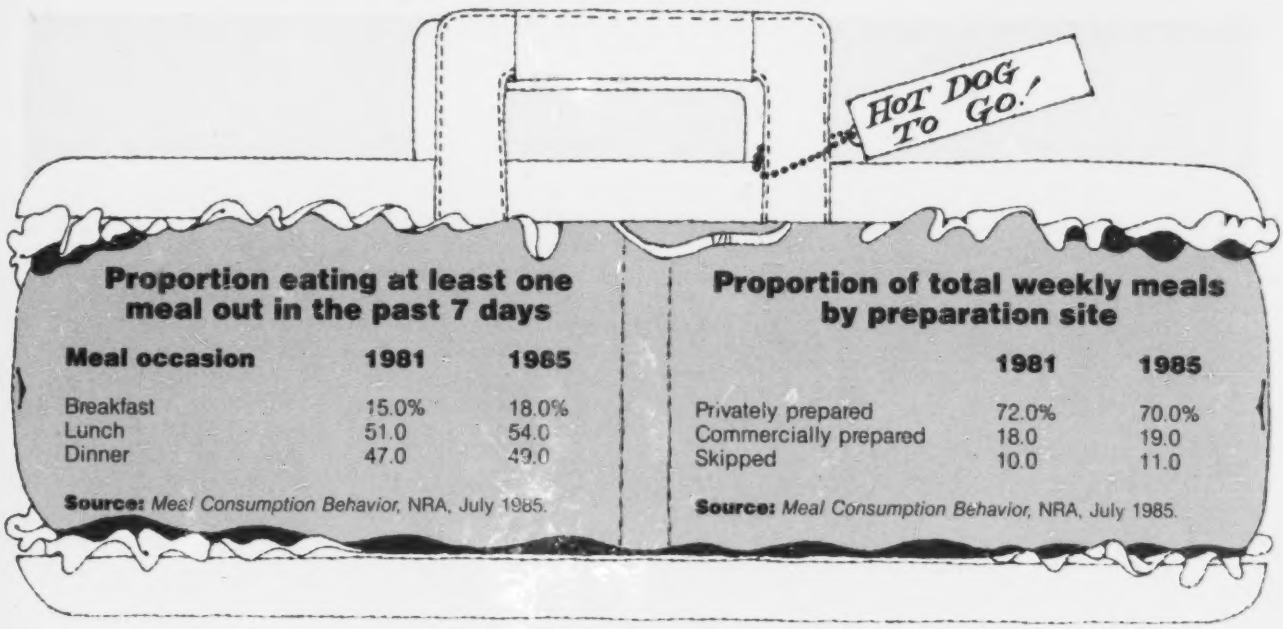
- Eighteen percent of all individuals purchased food at a restaurant or cafeteria for breakfast at least once in the seven-day survey period.
- Individuals consumed, on average, 0.5 breakfasts away from home.
- The average individual skipped 1.5 breakfasts.

Lunch

- Fifty four percent of all individuals consumed commercially prepared lunches at least once during the survey period.
- Individuals consumed, on average, 2.1 lunches away from home.
- The average individual skipped only 0.6 lunches.

Dinner

- Forty nine percent of all individuals consumed commercially prepared dinners at least once in the one-week survey period.
- Individuals consumed, on average, 1.1 dinners away from home.
- The average individual skipped a mere 0.1 dinners.



Proportion eating at least one meal out in the past 7 days

Meal occasion	1981	1985
Breakfast	15.0%	18.0%
Lunch	51.0	54.0
Dinner	47.0	49.0

Source: *Meal Consumption Behavior*, NRA, July 1985.

Proportion of total weekly meals by preparation site

	1981	1985
Privately prepared	72.0%	70.0%
Commercially prepared	18.0	19.0
Skipped	10.0	11.0

Source: *Meal Consumption Behavior*, NRA, July 1985.

1981 and 1985. Of all weekly meals in 1985, seven out of 10 were prepared at home or at a friend's home, two out of 10 were prepared commercially (at restaurants, fast food/take out places or school/ work cafeterias) and one out of 10 was skipped. These approximate the proportions in 1981.

Men eat away from home more often . . .

For all meal occasions, men are more likely than women to eat away from home. In a typical week men will purchase 4.2 meals from a restaurant or cafeteria and women will purchase 3.4 meals.

More men will eat lunch out in a typical week as well. Male respondents reported purchasing restaurant food for lunch 2.4 times a week versus 1.9 times for female respondents. In fact, 56 percent of the men surveyed said they had purchased at least one lunch during the survey period from a restaurant or fast food place. In comparison, the proportion for women was a somewhat lower 51 percent. A similar pattern holds true for breakfast and dinner. Slightly more than half the men reported at least one dinner away from home versus 48 percent of the women. For breakfast away from home the proportions are 21 percent for men and 16 percent for women.

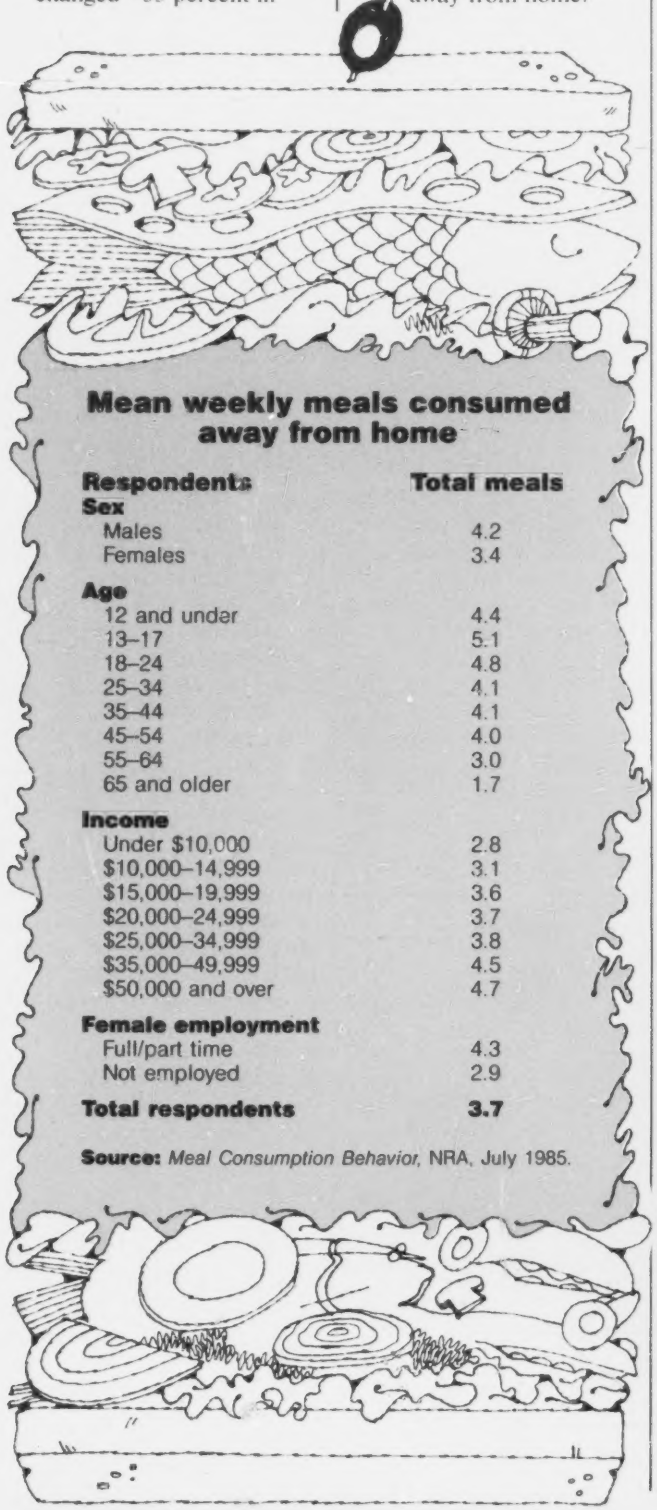
Nevertheless, women have increased their eating out occasions considerably more than have men in recent years, and this is especially true for lunch. In 1981, 46.4 percent of the female respondents re-

Proportion who reported eating at home, at restaurants and skipping meals

Meal Occasion	Privately Prepared	Commercially Prepared	Skipped
Breakfast			
At least once	79.9%	18.0%	29.2%
1–2 times	8.4	10.7	5.8
3–4 times	6.1	3.1	4.7
5–7 times	65.4	4.2	18.7
None	20.2	82.0	70.7
Lunch			
At least once	78.0%	53.6%	17.5
1–2 times	18.6	18.5	8.4
3–4 times	9.6	8.5	3.1
5–7 times	49.8	26.6	6.0
None	22.0	46.3	82.5
Dinner			
At least once	91.8%	48.8%	5.1%
1–2 times	3.3	33.8	3.7
3–4 times	10.5	9.5	0.7
5–7 times	78.0	5.5	0.7
None	8.2	51.2	94.8

Source: *Meal Consumption Behavior*, NRA, July 1985.

ported at least one commercially prepared lunch, and in 1985 this proportion jumped to 51 percent. The proportion for male respondents remained virtually unchanged—55 percent in 1981 and 56 percent in 1985. The continued rise in the number of working women is primarily responsible for the increase in women eating meals away from home.



Mean weekly meals consumed away from home

Respondents	Total meals
Sex	
Males	4.2
Females	3.4
Age	
12 and under	4.4
13–17	5.1
18–24	4.8
25–34	4.1
35–44	4.1
45–54	4.0
55–64	3.0
65 and older	1.7
Income	
Under $10,000	2.8
$10,000–14,999	3.1
$15,000–19,999	3.6
$20,000–24,999	3.7
$25,000–34,999	3.8
$35,000–49,999	4.5
$50,000 and over	4.7
Female employment	
Full/part time	4.3
Not employed	2.9
Total respondents	**3.7**

Source: *Meal Consumption Behavior*, NRA, July 1985.

Working women more likely to eat out . . .

For all meal occasions, women, who are employed either full time or part time, eat more restaurant meals than do females who are not employed or who are retired. In a typical week, working women consume 4.3 meals away from home versus 2.9 meals for women who do not work outside the home. Interestingly, working women consume slightly more meals away from home than do all men—4.3 versus 4.2.

Nearly one-fourth of the employed women purchased restaurant food for breakfast at least once during the survey week versus only 13 percent for those who are not employed. Three out of five working women ate lunch out at least once during the survey period, compared with a lower two out of five nonworking women. The pattern for the evening meal is similar. Fifty-four percent of working women ate dinner in a restaurant at least once in the seven-day period versus only four out of 10 for those who do not work outside the home.

Young adults eat out frequently . . .

Young adults between the ages of 18 and 24 eat more meals away from home than do members of any other age group. In one week, individuals in this age group consumed 4.8 meals away from home, compared with 3.7 meals for all consumers. These young adults are especially likely to purchase restaurant foods for lunch—six out of 10 do so at least once a week. On the other hand, senior citizens consumed the fewest meals away from home—1.7 restaurant meals during the survey week.

Individuals between the ages of 35 and 44 tend to purchase breakfast and dinner away from home more frequently than do other

For more information

For those interested in additional information about individual meal consumption behavior, the National Restaurant Association has made available a more detailed report that examines the eating patterns of various demographic segments of the population. *Meal Consumption Behavior* presents an in-depth analysis of meal consumption behavior by age, sex, household characteristics and the employment status of women.

The cost to NRA members is $12.50 (plus $2.00 shipping and handling), and the cost to non-members is $25.00 (plus $2.50 shipping and handling). Residents of Washington, DC, must add six percent sales tax and Illinois residents must add seven percent. Chicago, IL residents must add an additional one percent sales tax, bringing their sales tax total to eight percent.

To order, contact NRA, 311 First St., N.W., Washington, DC 20001, or call (800) 424-5156 or (202) 638-6100. **Payment must accompany all orders.** Credit card telephone orders are accepted. Please specify order number CS 100 when placing your order.

groups. Twenty-three percent of the respondents from this age group reported having eaten a commercially prepared breakfast at least once in the past seven days, and approximately six out of 10 ate dinner in a restaurant at least once. On the other hand, only 8.8 percent of senior citizens consumed a commercially prepared breakfast at least once, and less than one-third reported having eaten dinner out.

Breakfast skipped . . .

Consumers participating in this survey skipped an average of 1.5 breakfasts, 0.6 lunches and 0.1 dinners during the seven-day survey period. Singles and working women skipped the most meals, 2.8 and 2.4, respectively, compared with 2.2 meals for all respondents. In addition, 36 percent of the single respondents and one-third of the working women reported skipping breakfast at least once during the week prior to the survey. Nearly one-fourth (24 percent) of singles skipped lunch at least once, and 12 percent skipped dinner at least once during the survey period. Furthermore, in the past week, approximately one in five working women (19 percent) stated that they had skipped lunch at least once, and six percent reported skipping dinner at least once.

More people skip breakfast than any other meal of the day. Nearly one-third of all respondents reported they had skipped breakfast at least once in the seven-day survey period. In comparison, only 17 percent reported skipping lunch, and fewer than one in 10 individuals skipped dinner at least once during that same week. —*Sallie Adams*

1982 Census update

Larger restaurant firms make inroads

• The restaurant industry, once dominated by small, independent restaurants, has gradually transformed into one in which large, multi-unit operations account for a growing share of restaurant units and sales.
• The number of restaurant firms with sales over one million dollars has grown significantly during the last decade.
• The 50 largest restaurant firms have captured an increasing proportion of units and sales.
• A growing number of firms have decided to incorporate, marking a movement away from sole proprietorships.

This article spotlights "establishment and firm size" data from the 1982 Census of Retail Trade *for eating places, restaurants and lunchrooms (outlets which offer tableservice) and refreshment places (limited menu, fast food establishments which generally do not offer tableservice). Included is information on the sales size of firms, single unit and multi-unit firms and sales size of establishments, as well as similar data from both the 1972 and 1977 Census.* The statistics shown here are for eating places with payroll only and do not include "mom and pop" operations having no paid employees.*

Large restaurant firms capture greater share of units and sales . . .

In 1982, 90 companies with sales of $50 million or more, represented 12.5 percent of eating place units and 24.4 percent of sales. Five years earlier, there were only 59 firms of this size in operation, accounting for a smaller 8.2 percent of eating place units and 18.7 percent of sales. In 1972, only 30 firms with sales of $50 million or more were in business, representing a modest 4.3 percent of eating place units and a mere 10.8 percent of sales.

Other sales size highlights:
• More than eight in 10 restaurant firms operating in 1982 had sales under $500,000, representing the lion's share of eating place units and sales—62.5 percent and 25.8 percent, respectively. However, in 1977, more than nine out of 10 restaurant companies reported sales below $500,000, and they captured an even larger 77.4 percent of units and 40.7 percent of sales.
• Restaurant and lunchroom companies with sales of $50 million or more accounted for 7.4 percent of units and 15.8 percent of sales in 1982. In comparison, these firms represented a more modest 4.3 percent of restaurant and lunchroom units and 9.6 percent of sales in 1977.

* NRA's information and research department has additional information from the 1982 Census for cafeterias and other eating places (food contractors as well as ice cream and frozen custard stands). Data on the concentration of firms, the legal organization of firms and employment size of establishments are also available. You may obtain this information by writing NRA's Information Service and Library, 311 First Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20001.

• In 1982, smaller restaurant and lunchroom firms, those with sales under $500,000, captured 69.5 percent of eating place units and 29.5 percent of sales. Ten years earlier, however, firms of this size captured a considerably higher 90 percent of units and 60.8 percent of sales.
• Larger fast food firms, those with sales of $50 million or more, represented a greater percentage of units and sales in 1982 than in prior years—13.3 percent and 25.7 percent, respectively.
• Smaller companies continued to dominate the fast food segment, although their share of the market is slipping. Eighty-four percent of these firms had sales under $500,000 in 1982 versus 96.9 percent in 1977.

Multi-unit firms gain ground . . .

Multi-unit firms are gaining an increasing share of restaurant units and sales. Firms with 25 or more units captured only 8.5 percent of eating place units and 14.7 percent of sales in 1972; just 10 years later, however, these companies constituted a considerably larger 14.6 percent of eating place units and 27.4 percent of sales.

Other unit size highlights:
• Independent restaurant firms (those operating only one unit and not affiliated with a franchise company) accounted for a whopping 94.5 percent of all eating place companies in 1982, 72.4 percent of all units and 52.1 percent of sales. In addition, according to information available for the first time, single unit firms that are part of a multi-unit franchise accounted for 1.2 percent of all restaurant companies, 0.9 percent of units and 1.6 percent of sales.
• Multi-unit restaurant and lunchroom companies with 25 or more units captured 8.1 percent of the restaurant and lunchroom units and 17.5 percent of sales in 1982. In 1977, these firms accounted for a more modest 5.8 percent of units and 13.2 percent of sales.
• In 1982, restaurant and lunchroom companies with only one unit represented 83.5 percent of units and 65.5 percent of sales. Single-unit firms affiliated with

Sales size of eating place firms (1977 and 1982)

	Percent of firms		Percent of units		Percent of sales	
Sales range	**1977**	**1982**	**1977**	**1982**	**1977**	**1982**
Under $500,000	92.3%	82.4%	77.4%	62.5%	40.7%	25.8%
$500,000 to $999,999	5.2	10.5	5.5	9.1	14.8	14.5
$1,000,000 to $4,999,999	2.3	6.4	5.1	9.4	16.4	22.4
$5,000,000 to $9,999,999	0.1	0.4	1.4	2.3	3.6	4.8
$10,000,000 to $49,999,999	0.1	0.2	2.4	4.2	5.8	8.0
$50,000,000 and over	**	**	8.2	12.5	18.7	24.4

**Less than 0.1 percent*
Source: "Establishment and Firm Size," *1977 and 1982 Census of Retail Trade*, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

Sales size of restaurant and lunchroom firms (1977 and 1982)

	Percent of firms		Percent of units		Percent of sales	
Sales range	**1977**	**1982**	**1977**	**1982**	**1977**	**1982**
Under $500,000	89.9%	80.4%	81.5%	69.5%	44.8%	29.5%
$500,000 to $999,999	7.0	12.4	6.9	11.2	18.1	18.6
$1,000,000 to $4,999,999	2.9	6.7	4.3	8.0	18.1	24.9
$5,000,000 to $9,999,999	0.1	0.3	1.0	1.2	3.3	3.9
$10,000,000 to $49,999,999	**	0.2	2.0	2.6	6.1	7.2
$50,000,000 and over	**	**	4.3	7.4	9.6	15.8

**Less than 0.1 percent*
Source: "Establishment and Firm Size," *1977 and 1982 Census of Retail Trade*, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

Sales size of refreshment place firms (1977 and 1982)

	Percent of firms		Percent of units		Percent of sales	
Sales range	**1977**	**1982**	**1977**	**1982**	**1977**	**1982**
Under $500,000	96.9%	84.4%	68.9%	57.5%	37.0%	24.3%
$500,000 to $999,999	2.3	8.5	6.4	7.6	13.3	11.8
$1,000,000 to $4,999,999	0.7	6.3	8.0	11.6	17.0	22.3
$5,000,000 to $9,999,999	0.5	0.5	2.6	3.6	5.0	6.1
$10,000,000 to $49,999,999	**	0.3	3.7	6.4	5.6	9.7
$50,000,000 and over	**	**	10.4	13.3	22.2	25.7

**Less than 0.1 percent*
Source: "Establishment and Firm Size," *1977 and 1982 Census of Retail Trade*, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

a franchise organization accounted for an additional 1.5 percent of units and 2.7 percent of sales.

• Fast food firms with 25 or more units accounted for 17.6 percent of fast food units and a significant 31.2 percent of sales in 1982. In contrast, these companies represented a smaller 14.9 percent of units and 28.3 percent of sales five years earlier.

• Independent quick service firms (single unit operations not affiliated with a franchise company) captured 63.1 percent of units and 40.9 percent of sales in 1982, and single units owned by a franchisee accounted for 1.2 percent of units and 1.4 percent of sales.

More restaurant establishments posted sales over one million dollars in 1982 . . .

A considerably larger number of eating place establishments posted sales of one million dollars or more in 1982. These operations accounted for 7.6 percent of all eating place units and one-third of sales. In contrast, restaurants with sales over one million dollars represented a mere 3.2 percent of units and 19.7 percent of eating place sales in 1977 and captured a scant 0.8 percent of units and a modest 10.5 percent of sales in 1972.

Other sales highlights:

• There were fewer eating place establishments with sales under $500,000 in 1982. These establishments captured almost 77 percent of units and 36.7 percent of eating place sales. In 1972, however, these restaurants represented a larger 96 percent of the eating place units and nearly 72 percent of sales.

• In 1982, restaurant and lunchroom establishments with sales over one million dollars constituted 8.7 percent of units and almost 38 percent of sales. In comparison, these million dollar operations accounted for only half as many units (4.0 percent), and 23 percent of sales in 1977.

• Restaurants and lunchroom establishments with sales of $500,000 or less captured a whopping 94.3 percent of units and 67.4 percent of sales in 1972. Ten years later, these operations accounted for only three-fourths of restaurant and lunchroom units and 35 percent of sales.

• Fast food establishments with sales over one million dollars represented a greater proportion of fast food units and sales in 1982—5.9 percent and 23.6 percent, respectively.

• In 1982, quick service establishments with sales less than $500,000 represented 77.4 percent of total fast food units and 41.7 percent of sales, compared with 1977 when these operations accounted for slightly over 88 percent of the units and 60 percent of sales.

—Susan Adelman

Single unit and multi-unit eating place firms (1982)

Number of units	Percent of firms	Percent of units	Percent of sales
Single units	94.5%	72.4%	52.1%
Multi-units	5.5	27.6	47.9
1 establishment	1.2	0.9	1.6
2 establishments	2.2	3.3	4.6
3–9 establishments	1.7	5.7	9.0
10–24 establishments	0.3	3.1	5.2
25 and more establishments	0.1	14.6	27.4

Source: "Establishment and Firm Size," *1982 Census of Retail Trade*, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

Single unit and multi-unit restaurant and lunchroom firms (1982)

Number of units	Percent of firms	Percent of units	Percent of sales
Single units	95.9%	83.5%	65.5%
Multi-units	4.1	16.5	34.5
1 establishment	1.7	1.5	2.7
2 establishments	1.4	2.4	4.1
3–9 establishments	0.8	2.9	6.3
10–24 establishments	0.1	1.5	4.0
25 and more establishments	0.1	8.1	17.5

Source: "Establishment and Firm Size," *1982 Census of Retail Trade*, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

Single unit and multi-unit refreshment place firms (1982)

Number of units	Percent of firms	Percent of units	Percent of sales
Single units	91.5%	63.1%	40.9%
Multi-units	8.5	36.9	59.1
1 establishment	1.8	1.2	1.4
2 establishments	3.1	4.3	5.5
3–9 establishments	3.0	9.0	13.5
10–24 establishments	0.5	4.8	7.5
25 and more establishments	0.2	17.6	31.2

Source: "Establishment and Firm Size," *1982 Census of Retail Trade*, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

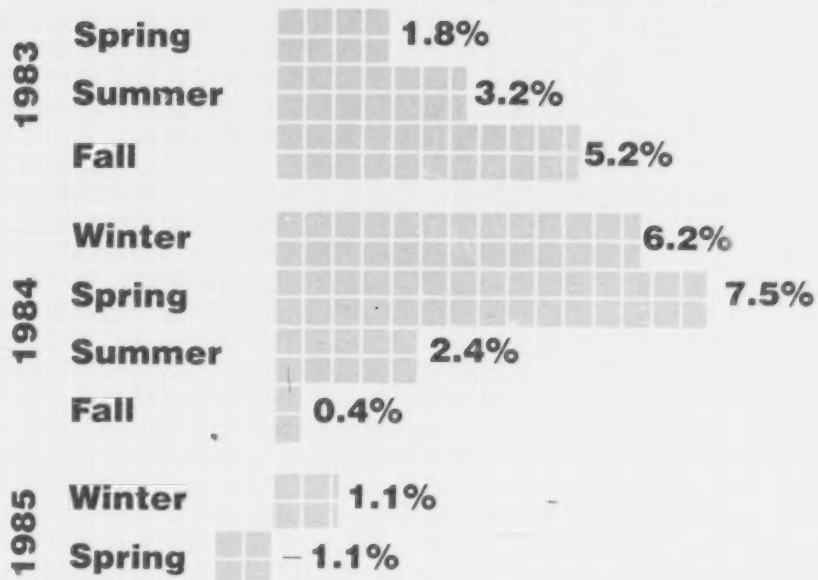
March-April-May

CREST Report

Spring quarter highlights:

- **Customer traffic:** Declined 1.1 percent.
- **Sales:** Edged up 0.9 percent.
- **Visit frequency:** Increased 0.8 percent.
- **Average check size:** Moved up 2.1 percent.
- **Restaurant types:**
  Quick service customer traffic: Advanced 2.5 percent.
  Upscale customer traffic: Declined 4.4 percent.
  Midscale customer traffic: Dropped 7.6 percent.
- **Meal periods:**
  Breakfast customer traffic: Increased 3.0 percent.
  Dinner customer traffic: Fell 1.2 percent.
  Lunch customer traffic: Dropped 4.0 percent.

Percent change in quarterly traffic
(spring 1983–spring 1985)



Note: Percent change is from the same quarter in prior year.
Source: *CREST Household Report*, GDR/CREST Enterprises.

Customer traffic falls 1.1 percent. . .

Customer traffic at the nation's restaurants declined 1.1 percent during the March-April-May quarter according to CREST's *Household Report*. This marks the first decline in traffic in more than two and one-half years, and follows positive, but modest, gains in the prior two quarters of 1.1 percent and 0.4 percent.

Less upbeat economic news, such as real GNP growth of only 0.3 percent in the first quarter and a relatively high, though stable, unemployment rate of 7.3 percent, contributed to this poor customer count performance. Many people were concerned about job stability, especially those employed in the industrial sector where lay offs and plant closings were common. However, estimates for real GNP during the second quarter of 1985 reveal that the economy is now growing at a higher, but still sluggish, 1.7 percent annual rate. In addition, retail sales have perked up since February 1985, jumping 5.5 percent in March, 7.4 percent in April and 6.5 percent in May versus the same months in 1984.

Consumer confidence slips. . .

Relatively high unemployment rates and slower economic growth caused consumer confidence to falter in the spring quarter. In addition, delayed income tax returns caused many consumers to rethink their short term spending plans. Also, some took a look at their debt load and decided it was time to reduce spending and pay bills. As a result, consumer confidence in their general economic well-being dropped significantly in March, rebounded in April and dropped again in May.

However, despite lagging confidence and high unemployment, personal income rose 0.5 percent in March and jumped 1.0 percent in April. Personal income then declined 0.5 percent in May. Additionally, inflation rose at a moderate pace during the March-April-May period—up an average 3.6 percent. This is a slight improve-

ment over the 3.7 percent increase recorded in the winter quarter and the 4.1 percent advance posted in the fall quarter of 1984.

NRA is optimistic that the restaurant industry will grow at a healthy pace in 1985. Real eating place sales (adjusted for inflation) are expected to increase by about 3.0 percent in 1985. (A detailed revised forecast will be featured in the September ***NRA NEWS.***) The summer months should be especially strong due to moderately rising inflation, increased vacation travel and the continued rise of disposable personal income.

Households dine out more. . .

Households dined out more often in the spring quarter. Visit frequency—the average number of times families and singles visited restaurants—rose 0.8 percent. This is significantly less than the 3.0 percent advance recorded in the winter quarter, but it approximates the 0.9 percent gain posted in the fall period. On the other hand, the number of households that dined out at least once in the spring quarter was down 1.0 percent from the same quarter last year.

Visit frequency varies by industry segment with quick service restaurants posting the largest gain—3.9 percent. Upscale restaurants recorded a 0.9 percent decline in visit frequency, and midscale restaurants posted a larger 4.2 percent decrease. However, restaurant penetration—the actual number of households dining out at least once in the two-week period—declined for all three segments. Quick service restaurants reported a decline in penetration of only 0.2 percent while upscale and midscale restaurants posted decreases of 2.3 and 2.9 percent respectively.

Percent change in per person check*
(spring 1983–spring 1985)

* *Based on average for two-week period.*
** *No change.*
Note: Percent change is from the same period in prior year.
Source: *CREST Household Report*, GDR/CREST Enterprises.

Restaurant sales up 0.9 percent. . .

CREST sales edged up a slight 0.9 percent during the March-April-May quarter, the slowest rate of growth in more than two and one-half years. In comparison, sales advanced 4.7 percent in the previous quarter and were up a significant 11.8 percent in the spring of 1984.

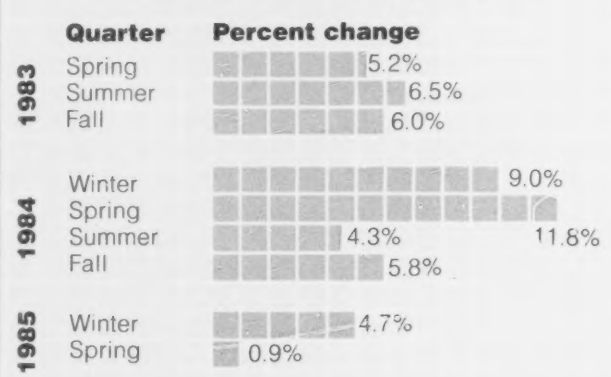
However, the average expenditure for a restaurant meal or snack—per person check size—rose only 2.1 percent in the spring quarter. This is less than the 3.9 percent gain recorded by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for food-away-from-home during the March-April-May period. This difference may be due to the fact that participants in the CREST panel ordered fewer and less expensive menu items than in the prior year. Last winter the average check was up a higher 3.6 percent.

Breakfast traffic rises 3.0 percent. . .

Breakfast was the only major meal period in which traffic increased during the spring quarter, rising 3.0 percent over the 1984 spring quarter. Customer counts at dinner fell 1.2 percent, while lunch traffic declined 4.0 percent.

The advance in breakfast traffic is significantly less than the 14.2 percent increase recorded in the December-January-February period. It is also lower than the 6.5 percent advance posted in the fall quarter. The drop in lunch and dinner traffic may reflect consumer concern about their economic well-being as well as a slowing in discretion-

Percent change in quarterly CREST sales*
(spring 1983–spring 1985)



* *Sales based on total U.S. average for two-week period each quarter.*
Note: Percent change is from the same period in prior year.
Source: *CREST Household Report*, GDR/CREST Enterprises.

ary income growth.

Breakfast highlights:

- Sales for the morning meal rose 2.1 percent.
- The average check was $2.22 per person—down 0.9 percent.
- Visit frequency increased 5.4 percent, and the number of households purchasing breakfast away from home remained unchanged from the spring of 1984.

Lunch highlights:

- Lunch sales fell 3.2 percent.
- The per person check averaged $3.15—up 1.0 percent.
- The average number of times households ate lunch out fell 1.2 percent, and penetration declined 1.6 percent.

Dinner highlights:

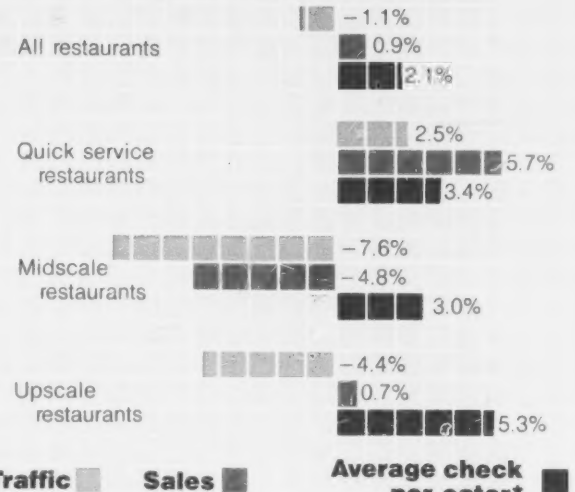
- Dinner sales advanced a moderate 2.2 percent.
- The average per person check increased 3.5 percent to $4.72.
- Visit frequency rose 1.9 percent, but penetration fell 2.9 percent.

Traffic increases at quick service restaurants. . .

Quick service restaurants recorded a 2.5 percent increase in customer counts during the March-April-May quarter, compared with decreases in traffic at the other two major restaurant groups. Traffic at upscale restaurants declined 4.4 percent, and customer counts at midscale restaurants were down 7.6 percent during the spring quarter.

Ethnic restaurants continue to do well in the quick service segment, and traffic also is up in the midscale ethnic restaurant category. In addition, customer counts at establishments specializing in ice cream and those specializing in barbecue made strong showings.

Spring quarter performance by restaurant segment



* *The average check per eater for all restaurants also reflects information from unreported segments.*

Note: Percent change from the same quarter in prior year.
Source: *CREST Household Report*, CREST NPD Research, Inc.

Quick service restaurant highlights:

- Sales at quick service establishments rose 5.7 percent. Increased traffic counts as well as increased visit frequency contributed to sales growth.
- The number of occasions on which promotions were used dropped to 12.5 percent from 14.0 percent in the spring quarter of 1984.
- Traffic at quick service restaurants edged up 2.5 percent. Significant advances in traffic at Oriental and barbecue restaurants helped boost customer counts for this segment.
- Customer counts at quick service ethnic restaurants advanced a significant 14.4 percent. Much of this growth is attributed to significant gains in traffic at both Mexican and Oriental establishments.
- Traffic at restaurants specializing in ice cream and donuts advanced 6.0 percent.

Upscale restaurant highlights:

- Upscale restaurant sales edged up 0.7 percent.
- Promotional usage increased considerably from 8.3 percent of all occasions in the spring quarter of 1984 to 9.4 percent of all occasions in the spring quarter of 1985.
- Traffic at upscale hotel restaurants declined 11.0 percent in the spring quarter versus a larger drop of 18.0 percent in the prior quarter.
- Customer counts at Mexican restaurants and fish restaurants reported the largest gains. However, traffic at upscale Oriental and steak establishments were down over the same quarter in the prior year.

Midscale restaurant highlights:

- Sales at midscale restaurants declined 4.8 percent.
- The number of occasions on which a promotion was involved increased slightly from 8.3 percent of occasions in the spring quarter of 1984 to 8.7 percent of occasions in 1985.
- Traffic at midscale ethnic restaurants increased 2.3 percent. The Italian restaurant segment posted the most impressive traffic gain.
- Although midscale restaurants posted a drop in customer counts of 3.2 percent, significant traffic gains were reported by two categories—barbecue and fish/seafood.

What is CREST?

Launched in September 1975, the CREST (Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends) survey is designed to track expenditures and behavior in the commercial segment of the foodservice industry, including information by type and classification of restaurant and also by meal or snack period.

Approximately 10,000 families and 2,800 non-family households representing demographic patterns in the U.S. have been selected to participate in the study. Each household is asked to record every meal and snack experience during a particular two-week period for each of the four quarters of the year. Detailed entries are required for meals eaten or purchased away from home in establishments such as restaurants, hotels and motels, fast food/drive-ins, delicatessens, refreshment stands, carryouts, coffee shops, donut shops, ice cream shops or eating places inside variety stores or other retail stores. The diary does not include any meals eaten at schools, hospitals, colleges or other institutional feeding places.

CREST information can help restaurateurs compare their operation's performance with that of the total industry as well as with specific restaurant categories (quick service, midscale or upscale restaurants).

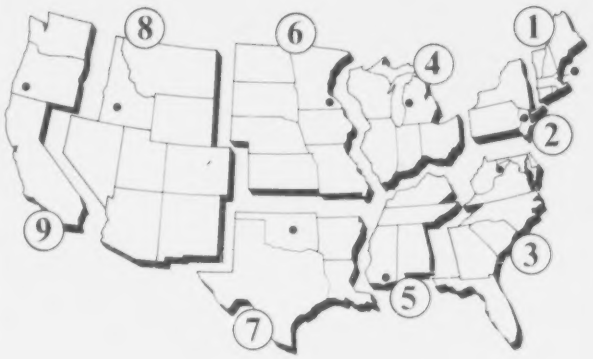
The CREST study can also provide valuable information concerning customer behavior, such as how much people spend, where they spend and when they spend. And, because it is an ongoing study, CREST information allows comparison against a standard—an aid in the development of trend analysis.

Readers wishing more information on the CREST study should contact GDR/CREST Enterprises, one of the NPD group of marketing and research companies, 1300 W. Higgins Rd., Park Ridge, IL 60068-5798.

How's business?

by Cecelia Niepold

Summer traffic has been unusually slow in several parts of the country due to lagging local economies, fewer foreign visitors and even unusual weather conditions. Some areas, however, continue to thrive.



1 NEW ENGLAND

Location: Salem, MA
NRA member: Joan Boudreau
Operation: The Lyceum
Profile: Fullservice restaurant
In business: 13 years
Seats: 300
Meals served: Lunch, dinner, weekend brunch

"Business could be a little better," says **Joan Boudreau,** owner of The Lyceum, an historic landmark in Salem, MA. Boudreau attributes the slow business to the strong U.S. dollar cutting into the usually lucrative Canadian tourist market.

The Lyceum's ambiance reflects its colorful history. During the 1800s the building was a well-known lecture hall featuring such personalities as Daniel Webster. Alexander Graham Bell also made the first public demonstration of the phone within its walls.

Today, the restaurant continues to have tie-ins with small lecture series and events, but the primary focus is the variety of food served: from lobster specials to filling sandwich combinations. A popular feature of the menu is the calorie breakdown section which offers calorie counts for various entrees.

2 MIDDLE ATLANTIC

Location: East Hanover, NJ
NRA member: Timothy Delaney
Operation: The Hornet's Nest
Profile: Family restaurant
In business: 4 years
Seats: 275
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

June is normally the best month at The Hornet's Nest. Graduation parties, engagement parties and other events really boost business. This summer has not been an exception: Sales are up 19 percent, according to owner **Timothy Delaney.**

Named after a local high school mascot, The Hornet's Nest has a neighborhood atmosphere. Focal points are bright stained glass windows illustrating neighboring towns and menu items named after local landmarks. Serving primarily Italian specialties, the restaurant is particularly known for its customized calzones—small loaves of bread stuffed to customers' liking.

As a special summer promotion, Delaney brought in a slush machine to create specialty icy drinks—both alcoholic and non-alcoholic. The refreshing concoctions are served in frosted glasses sporting The Hornet's Nest logo. These glasses will be given away at an end-of-the-summer "Big Chill" beach party hosted by Delaney.

3 SOUTH ATLANTIC

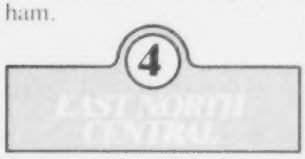
Location: Shepherdstown, WVA
NRA member: Kevin Connell
Operation: Yellow Brick Bank Restaurant
Profile: Fullservice restaurant
In business: 10 years
Seats: 80
Meals served: Lunch, dinner, Sunday brunch

"Business has been fairly steady; weekends have been particularly busy," says **Connie Stanley,** bar manager at the Yellow Brick Bank Restaurant. Situated in a small historic town about an hour and a half from Washington, DC, the restaurant receives a lot of "city escapees" during the weekends.

Located in a restored 1910 bank building, the restaurant offers visitors a nostalgic atmosphere with an art deco flavor. Big bay windows, white wicker booths and swirling ceiling fans add to the cozy charm.

Owner Kevin Connell has developed a creative

menu focusing on New American cuisine and fresh local products. A particular favorite is the sumptious Sunday brunch, featuring innovative combinations such as French toast made with cinnamon-flavored French bread and Virginia ham.

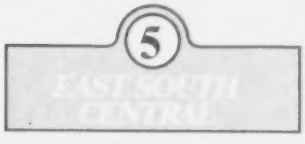


Location: Muskegon, MI
NRA member: Charles Meyers
Operation: The Gas Station
Profile: Fullservice restaurant
In business: 14 years
Seats: 100
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"Although we're generally slow in the summer, this year has been better than last year," says **Sean Murphy,** working kitchen manager at The Gas Station. Healthy industries in the area have helped boost business.

Named after the gas station that once occupied the site, the only reminder of the restaurant's origins is the Corvette hanging on the wall.

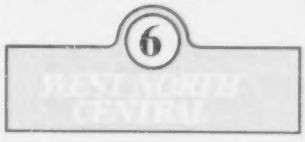
Gourmet hamburgers and a full line of Mexican favorites are specialties. The restaurant, a step ahead of the times, has been featuring hamburgers with a variety of toppings for at least 10 years.



Location: Biloxi, MS
NRA member: Tom Harvey
Operation: Cajun's Fabulous Fried Chicken
Profile: 3-unit fast food operation
In business: 6 years
Seats: 50 to 60
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

According to **Tom Harvey,** co-owner of Cajun's Fabulous Fried Chicken, summer traffic has been about the same as last year. Business has been strong enough, though, to warrant building a fourth unit in the Mississippi area.

The restaurant's flagship is its spicy fried chicken. Cajun rice and fresh vegetables are served as accompaniments. Although basically a counter service operation, the chain also features a daily all-you-can-eat buffet during both breakfast and lunch.

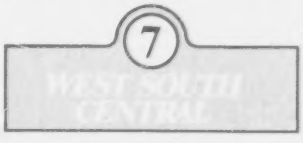


Location: Winona, MN
NRA member: Lambert Kowalewski
Operation: Hot Fish Shop
Profile: Family restaurant
In business: 53 years
Seats: 375
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"Business has been down this summer," says **Joe Cashenet,** general manager of the Hot Fish Shop. "People just aren't coming out as often," he explains.

A family-run operation, the Hot Fish Shop takes pride in offering its customers good value for the price. Specialties of the house are seafood items, such as pike dishes. Nightly entertainment is also a trademark.

The restaurant includes a fish market where customers can purchase fresh fish as well as prepared items, such as smoked seafood dishes and gourmet foods.



Location: Norman, OK
NRA member: Joe Sparks
Operation: Legend's Restaurant
Profile: Fullservice restaurant
In business: 17 years
Seats: 120
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"Business is somewhat slow," says **Joe Sparks,** owner of Legend's Restaurant in Norman, OK. The local economy has been depressed since 1982 when the oil industry experienced a downturn. Sparks is optimistic, however, because this fall state employees (the government is a top employer in Norman) are scheduled to receive their first raise in three years.

Because the restaurant depends a great deal on return business, Sparks changes the menu regularly to maintain customer interest. Recent additions have been lighter dishes, Cajun entrees and pasta.

Sparks has also made a large investment in landscaping to give his establishment a distinctive look. The outside patio, for instance, is surrounded by greenery, flowers and herbs. The herbs are used in dishes as much as possible.

Location: Bliss, ID
NRA member: Robin Ferry
Operation: Ox Bow Restaurant
Profile: Family restaurant
In business: 22 years
Seats: 120
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

"Business has been down; the economy is not too good around here," says **Jan Gortsma,** assistant manager at the Ox Bow Restaurant. The small town of Bliss, located halfway between Boise and Twin Falls, is experiencing some setbacks: An electronics plant just closed, and the local agricultural industry is depressed.

To appeal to value-conscious customers, the Ox Bow offers a daily special that includes soup, salad, vegetables and a main dish for under $3.00. Known for its all-American food, the restaurant specializes in fried chicken and homemade treats, such as scones and biscuits.

Location: Grant's Pass, OR
NRA member: Nancy Driskell
Operation: The Skinny Spot
Profile: Low-calorie eatery
In business: 7 years
Seats: 35
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"Although business was about the same during the first part of the summer as last year, things have slowed down a little bit since then," says **Kristi Dolmag,** assistant manager at The Skinny Spot. Dolmag believes the scorching heat (over a month of high temperatures and no rain) is discouraging people from eating out.

Even so, The Skinny Spot still does well because of its unique menu. The restaurant offers low-calorie entrees, which taste as fattening as regular foods. Although no sugar is used, the menu does include desserts and cakes. A calorie count sheet is provided listing each product's calories and exchange rate (helpful for diabetics and dieters).

The concept has been well received. Customers don't hesitate to travel a considerable distance to dine or buy food for take out. Word has even spread to California where the restaurant supplies its products to another operation.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Jobs that change with the weather

Employees at Chicago's acclaimed 95th Restaurant, located high atop the John Hancock Building, one of the city's skyscrapers, needn't worry about being left out in the cold when the winter slow season hits. Management simply sends some of the staff 95 floors below to work in the building's cafeteria, which the company also operates.

"Unlike the restaurant, the cafeteria is busiest during the winter months," explains Christian Devos, general manager of the 95th. "People who work in the building don't want to venture outdoors during their lunch hour, so the cafeteria

is always full." Devos says employees of the 95th, who are accustomed to working in an upscale setting, adjust well to the temporary change in environment.

—NRA News interview

Fast food corporate style

Employees at Wang Laboratories' corporate headquarters in Lowell, MA, don't have far to go to get a Whopper and fries. This past spring, Burger King Corporation opened a new unit in the lobby of the Wang building, the company's first such unit to be opened directly at a corporate headquarters.

"We're pleased to be able to serve the 6,000 people who work at Wang's headquarters complex," said Marcel Bergeron, New England region vice president of Burger King. The new restaurant features a full breakfast, lunch and dinner menu and seats 400.

—Burger King

Hors d'oeuvre cookbook

Riding the crest of the emerging popularity of bar food is *Marv Blair's Hors D'Oeuvre Cookbook*, published this month by Freundlich Books. Although designed for discriminating consumers, there are ideas for operators as well.

The book provides recipes, menus and party planning ideas for events ranging from catered gatherings on the backyard patio to gallery openings and country weddings. It describes taste, texture, color and costs of 480 hors d'oeuvre recipes, from such old favorites as pates and dips to trendier items like chicken wings, sesame seed fingers and spinach pumpernickel loaf. Non-alcoholic fruit punch recipes also are provided.

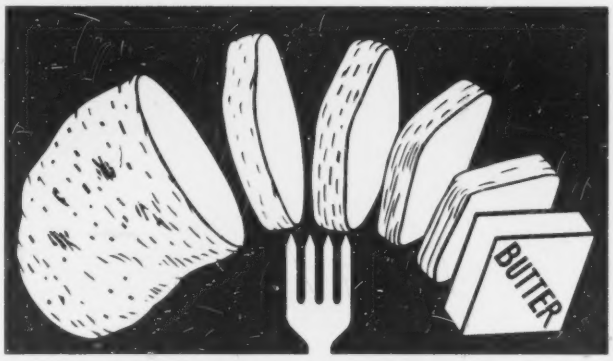
—Freundlich Books

'Buttery' potatoes are dieter's dream

Two new potatoes, which resulted from interbreeding experiments in Europe, were recently test marketed in four U.S. cities. Both varieties sold out before the end of the year.

The reason? The potatoes, Crimson Gold (a red potato) and Golden Delight (a white potato), are golden and creamy textured and offer a naturally rich, buttery taste—without the addition of butter. They may well represent the dieter's dream; they contain the same number of calories as other potatoes.

—Food Management



Wine notes

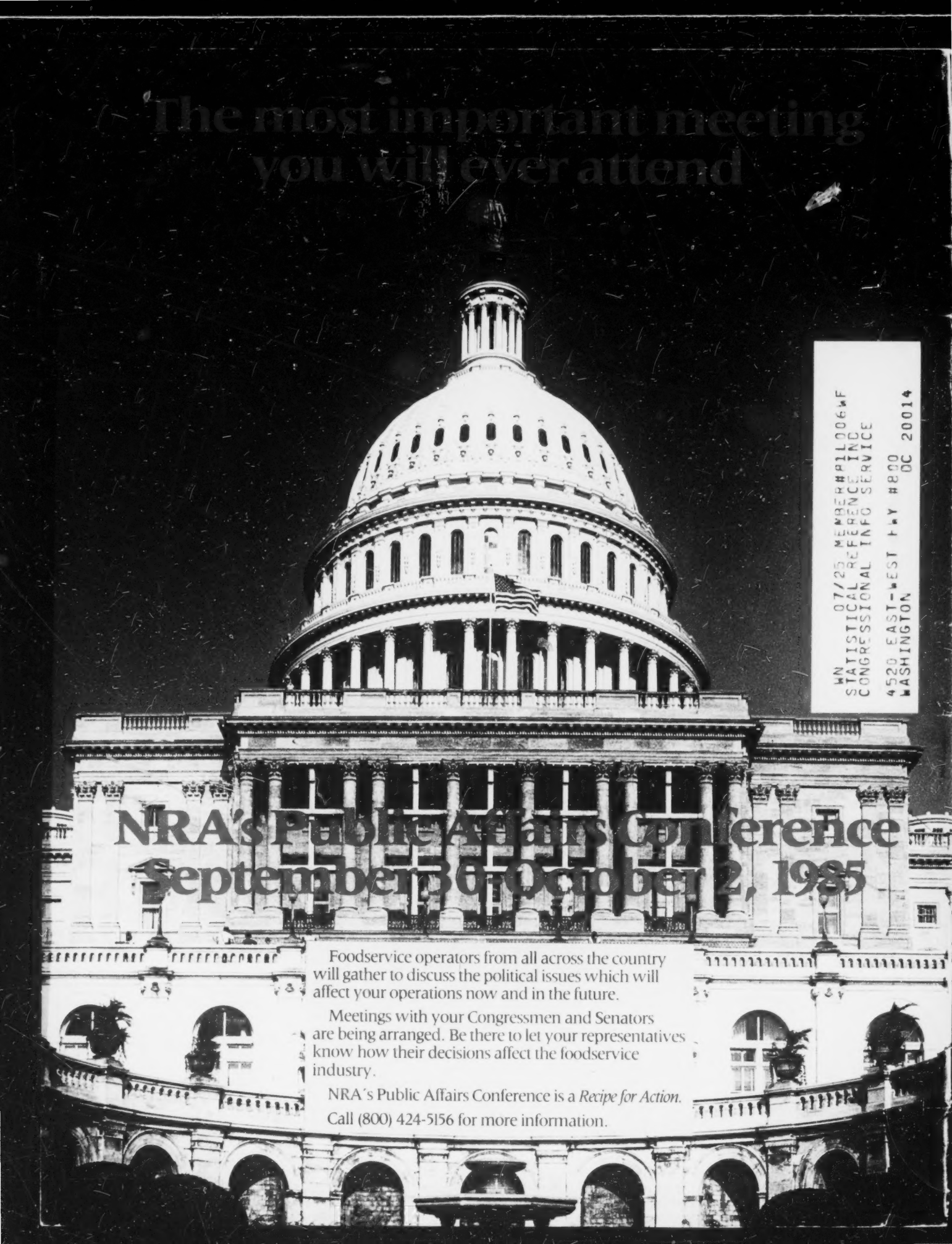
- Many airlines are upgrading their wine service in both first-class and coach to lure sophisticated airline travellers. Airlines, which cater heavily to business travellers, hope that by offering fine wines, such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay and Bordeaux, they will upgrade the in-flight experience and encourage repeat business.
- For the novice sommelier, a new wine opener has recently been introduced. It is designed with a special attachment that catches the cork if it falls into the bottle.

—Restaurants & Institutions, USA Today

Why businesses fail

Thirty-three percent of small business failures can be blamed on bad management, according to a survey of owners of USA firms with annual sales of $300,000 or less. Other reasons include inadequate capital (21 percent), lack of experience (16 percent), owner not dedicated (16 percent) and economic circumstances (13 percent). The survey of 203 small business firms was conducted by Comprehensive Accounting Corporation.

—USA Today


The most important meeting you will ever attend
WN 07/25 MEMBER##A1L006#F
STATISTICAL REFERENCE INC
CONGRESSIONAL INFO SERVICE
4520 EAST-WEST HWY #800
WASHINGTON DC 20014
NRA's Public Affairs Conference
September 30-October 2, 1985
Foodservice operators from all across the country will gather to discuss the political issues which will affect your operations now and in the future.
Meetings with your Congressmen and Senators are being arranged. Be there to let your representatives know how their decisions affect the foodservice industry.
NRA's Public Affairs Conference is a *Recipe for Action.*
Call (800) 424-5156 for more information.